

Interviewed by Kathleen Irving, 10 and 12 May 2004

Transcribed by Kathleen Irving, November 2004

Kathleen Irving (KI): This is Kathi Irving. I'm with Dr. Ray Spendlove and his home at 733 South 500 West in Vernal. Today is the tenth of May 2004.

You have given me your list of ancestors, but could you please go over it for the tape?

Ray Spendlove: My father was Joseph A. Spendlove and my mother was Sarah Jane Jones Spendlove. My sisters and brothers, my oldest brother is Gordon J. Spendlove, he's a physician and he'll be ninety-six in October; he's living in Denver at the present time. The next child was Eleanor, but she died in infancy; then a sister, Sarah Beatrice Spendlove, she was a teacher, she taught mostly in Bingham High School.

KI: Did she not marry?

Ray: Yes, she married. I should have added Bates on there. She had a master's degree. Then my brother Max, Max Jones Spendlove. He was an electrical engineer. He spent most of his working life at the US Bureau of Mines in Washington, D.C.

KI: Where do you fit in?

Ray: I'm the last. I'm just almost five years younger than Max. My older brother, Gordon, was nine years older, then we're spread out to me, the last of the family.

KI: How did your parents meet? Your dad was born in Virgin, Utah?

Ray: He was born in Virgin, but he left that part of the country when he was, I guess, when he was twenty. He came north to some of the mining communities. He had been doing carpentry work with his father down there in the south, so he came up to find something that paid a little more. He found work in Mercur. Mercur was a gold mining community.

KI: Where is it?

Ray: Well, Mercur is about halfway between Ophir and Lehi. On the road between Salt Lake and Provo, if you take a lead off the highway, it would be probably west, you come around the mountains to a canyon where Mercur Gold Mines were. A little further on around was another mine that fizzled out real soon. It was called West Dip. Then on around further is Ophir Canyon where I spent my life from age two to twelve. Then on further around is Magna and Tooele, then you can come right back into the highway that you took off to go to Mercur. I don't know if you know where Lehi is?

KI: I do.

Ray: Well, okay, you just take off and go to Lehi, off the main highway to Provo and you keep going all around that mountain. The Kennecott Copper Mines is in the center of that circle as you'd drive around that area. Have you ever been there?

KI: Yeah, now I know what we're talking about. Was Mercur a pretty small place?

Ray: It was quite a booming place at one time. I wish I had right at my fingertips here a picture of the bustling community, with houses right close together and all kinds of businesses. It burned down and almost every stitch in the area burned. There was nothing left except the mine dumps. But it built up again.

But the thing is, it run out of gold. So they had to shut down. But new technologies come around and they found they could get a lot more gold out of those dumps. So they milled them again and got more gold, as best they could. Then they had to quit. New technologies got better and they went through the same again. I think even the third or fourth time they went through all those dumps and finally they think they've got about all gold out that they can get. It's amazing to have the same material worked over and over to get every last bit of gold out of it.

KI: So your dad went there to work, and where was your mom?

Ray: I think they met, probably, in Mercur. She was raised most of her life in a place called Hardscrabble, which I don't think is on the map now, but it is somewhere around Bountiful, up into the foothills. I'm not sure of the exact occasion when they met, but she had some brothers that went to work in the Mercur mines, too, so on visiting there, I think it was, I know that's where it was they met.

There were two or three couples that decided to get together and go on a picnic and actually my father was paired off with another girl. But he and Mother got to liking each other better, so it finally turned out that he and Mother became sweethearts and finally married. He was two years older than she was.

KI: Where did they marry?

Ray: They were married in Salt Lake in the Salt Lake Temple, but they started their home in Mercur.

KI: When were they married?

Ray: She was married when she was eighteen [1907]. I can't remember the exact date. My mother was born on the tenth of June; my father was born on the eleventh of June, and I was born on the eleventh of June. So we all celebrated our birthdays at the same time.

KI: That's really interesting. So you spent from the age of two, then, in Mercur?

Ray: No, Ophir. I was born in Magna in 1917, June eleventh, and at age two my father moved to Ophir. In the mines he got silicosis. They used hammers and drills and it made so much dust and they didn't have any ventilation and that stuff, so a lot of the men got silicosis. It give him so

much lung trouble, he had to give it up. So he went to Magna and got a job in the smelters there, but it was almost as bad, the fumes and the chemicals and the heavy metals and all, it still bothered him.

So his brother-in-law, my mother's brother Omni, worked for Utah Power and Light and he learned of an opening in Ophir Canyon operating a power plant. So he moved there and for the rest of his working years he worked for a power company some way or other, this generating plant in Ophir, until we moved to Bingham in 1929 and he spent the rest of his days there operating a sub-station for Utah Power and Light. In Ophir he had a twelve-hour a day job, like from midnight until twelve noon. His counterpart worked the opposite. Then in Bingham he operated the sub-station and it was a twenty-four-hour a day job. There wasn't much to do except just keep an eye on things there.

KI: Did he just live there?

Ray: Yeah, we had a house like this and a big four-story sub-station was forty feet away.

KI: Did they make you pay for your electricity or did you get it free?

Ray: We got electricity free and 'most everything free. The rent was free, water was free, there was no meter on the house. In Ophir we had outside plumbing, so when we got to Bingham and they had inside bathtubs and so forth, why, I took advantage of it. I loved that. So I spent a lot of time using up their hot water.

I didn't feel bad about that, but I did feel bad about my father being tied down so much. He'd get one day a week off and somebody would come up there and kind of take over while he went and did whatever he wanted to do. But most of those jobs were really tying. At the power plant in Ophir, much the same. The house was little further away from his job, but there wasn't too much that he had to do, just supervise the generators and make sure everything was smooth. If lightning storms or trouble, why, he'd take charge, but he didn't get a lot of time off there, it was pretty tying.

But he was able to be home an awful lot because we were just living right next door. So he spent hours and hours and hours improving his yard, planting flowers.

[Short pause to get a photo.]

KI: Please tell me about going up on the mountain and getting flagstones.

Ray: That was in Ophir Canyon. We'd take my little wagon and a wheelbarrow to gather flat stones from the slide rock beneath the cliffs. These cliffs were essentially our backyard. Max was five years older than I was, but I got to be big fast so there wasn't much difference in our size by the time I was nine or ten. We'd take the wagon and the wheelbarrow up into this sliderock and load up with flat rock as big as we could handle and haul it home. Dad would make fences, rock walls, and walks. We had tons and tons of those flat rocks, so he built rock walls all along the stream, backfilled with dirt. So instead of our backyard sloping down to the stream, it came out level to the rock wall. Then with cedar posts available all over the hills, Dad built a very interesting rustic bridge across the stream, then down steps to where we planted our garden with

many vegetables and berries. The gardens and flowers and lawns really made our surroundings beautiful. Mother wrote really fine poetry about our abodes in Ophir and Bingham.

KI: It looks very isolated, though. Besides this man, Mr. Rice, you said, who switched shifts with him, did you have any other neighbors?

Ray: Yeah, downstream further, about a mile, there was a farm family called the Bateses. Upstream there was a vacant house that had people before I came there. But then two miles up canyon from here there was a man that was called Old John Williams. He didn't have any children, but only about a block or so up further was a Morgan family that did have children. Then there was another house up about a mile beyond that. Then two or three miles up was the town of Ophir. So we were really isolated down here, which was a real influence on my life. I was kind of a loner.

KI: That would especially be true since your brothers were so much older than you.

Ray: Yeah, my closest sibling, Max, was about five years older. But when I got to be around six or seven and eight, then we could become buddies, and in summertime we just hiked the mountains on this side of the canyon. They were way, way up, much further. There were a lot of old worn out mines up there and we explored those, and did a lot of crazy things that no kid should ever be allowed to do.

When they abandoned those mines, they just walked away and left the shops, and there were dynamite and detonators and fuses and carbide and everything in them. We managed to get in and we'd detonate that dynamite and those caps. It's funny we weren't killed. We'd go down the shafts to the bottom and they had a ladder nailed to the wall, but it being that old, a lot of the rungs were missing, and some of them were real loose. Again, we were really lucky there that one of us wasn't badly hurt or both of us.

But sometimes we'd spend days together just hiking these mountains. Mother and Dad had the whole community out once searching for us, thinking we were lost. They were searching all along the streams and around the mountains and they didn't know where we were.

KI: Where were you? Down inside a mine?

Ray: Well, no. We'd been in the opposite direction from most of the mines just exploring new country. We finally wound up at the last farm on this stream, which was about five miles down. We'd come down off the mountains and visited that family a little bit, then come back. So we were up on the tops of these mountains looking down when we saw all these cars down here. They were all looking for us. But we gave our mother kind of a bad time.

KI: You still went into Ophir to school even though you were that far from town?

Ray: Yeah, we went to Ophir to school. That is an interesting story, I think. Before I was old enough to go, my two brothers and sisters would ride in a wagon. The farthest one on the stream, the Johnsons, got a contract with the school board to drive the kids to school and the transportation was a horse-drawn wagon. So they'd start with their own kids, there were about

five, and stop next at the Jorgenson Ranch and then pick up about four, then the Bateses, about three or four depending on which years you're talking about, then my brother and sister, then the Morgans up there, so they had about fifteen kids in that wagon bed. In the winter they'd take the wheels off and put on snow runners and make a bobsled and they'd put a cover over the top of it, fill the box full of straw and hot rocks to keep us warm.

It was good until somebody was sick at the wrong family, then they didn't show up at all. After we'd stand out there waiting for a long time, before I even started school and after, then we'd start walking, which is about four more miles up the canyon. If the snow was deep, it was quite a trek. All of us had frostbite at one time or another on our toes. It was kind of a problem.

Eventually, they got an old truck that they'd haul us in and they had kind of a ladder made out of steel on the back. You'd climb up the ladder and get into this truck. Eventually, they got a old bus from somewhere. It wasn't a metal bus like ours, it was made out of wood and window frames built on it, just a homemade bus, you know. We rode that until my fifth year in school. Then they decided to transfer the kids from fifth grade on up to Tooele, which, as I mentioned, is around; you keep on going on. To go by all these farms and get to Tooele and back was about a sixty-five-mile round trip we had every day.

KI: What was the school like in Ophir? Is this a picture of it?

Ray: Yeah, that's when we first moved to Ophir, what it was like. But it didn't make much change. All they did was, this ground really slopes down the canyon. They built a cribbing in this, made out of logs, laid up into a wall. Then they filled in with dirt so this playground was more or less flat then, instead of steep mountainside. So it came out there maybe forty feet or so. They put slides there and these pulley things, whatever they are. There was enough room we could play softball and a few things. Out behind this, over here, was a boys' toilet and over here the girls'. But by the time I got to second grade, they had made lavatories underneath this part.

KI: They just added on to the outside of the building to make the lavatories?

Ray: No, they cut down in here and made one on this side for the boys, then made a stairway down from up here for the girls there. But until then it was an outside toilet.

KI: Is this the whole school?

Ray: That's the whole school, for the eight grades at that time. That would be about 1919.

KI: It looks to me like maybe there's fifty or sixty kids. Do you think so?

Ray: I don't know. Yeah, it does look about like that all right.

KI: How many grades did they teach in that school?

Ray: It was divided this way. There was a hallway down the center clear to the back. In the front half was a classroom; the front half here was a classroom. In the back half there were classrooms. So there were four classrooms. The first room was first and second grade. This one

was third and fourth. The one way there was fifth and sixth, and this was seventh and eighth.

Now, when my brother that's ninety years old got to the ninth grade, they had just built a little building right next here where they accommodated the ninth grade. But after the ninth grade, he had to go elsewhere to go to the tenth grade and so forth.

KI: They didn't bus him every day?

Ray: No, they didn't. They hadn't started busing to Tooele by then, so he went to live with an uncle in Richfield. Uncle Jim Spendlove was a carpenter and a shop teacher down in the high school in Richfield. He went to live with him. So he went his sophomore, junior and senior years in Richfield.

KI: Did you just have one teacher for both of the grades in the elementary school?

Ray: Yes, there were four teachers there. Mrs. King was our first and second grade teacher, little Miss Spears was the third and fourth, Miss Henderson, fifth and sixth, and I didn't know seventh and eighth because I didn't go to Ophir for seventh grade. They just quit seventh and eighth and put them to Tooele.

KI: You only lived in Ophir until you were twelve, though, is that correct?

Ray: Yes.

KI: Then where did you go?

Ray: To Bingham. The mines, again, in Ophir, fizzled out and there wasn't much demand for electricity there because most of the people moved away. Even today it's a beautiful canyon, up Ophir canyon, so a few people have summer homes up there and some stay year-round. Their electricity is piped in by Utah Power and Light from other plants. They don't have any more of those little tiny plants in operation anywhere. But at that time there were several of them.

But, like I say, at age twelve, we all moved to Bingham. Now, in Tooele, I was only there, well, school started in September and by November we had to move to Bingham, so I just had a very short time in Tooele.

KI: But didn't they have a high school?

Ray: Oh, yeah. As a matter of fact, when I got to ninth grade, ours was the first class to start in the brand new school. They didn't build it in Bingham proper. Are you familiar with Copperton at all?

KI: I've only just heard of it.

Ray: It's a community down outside the mouth of the canyon that Kennecott Copper, it was called Utah Copper at that time, built this beautiful community of homes. They had parks built there and ball diamonds and tennis courts. Just the nicest accommodations for employees, then

they'd rent them. It wasn't nearly enough for all their employees, but, I guess the favored ones, the ones that had the longevity and were good people, and maybe an asset to the company, got the first bid on those for rentals. All the homes in Copperton were shingled with copper shingles. I guess they did it as kind of an advertising ploy or something. I never saw it, but I think those shingles will be there forever. I don't know how expensive they are, but if you tried to buy them today, I imagine they'd be quite an expensive thing.

KI: By the time you made it to Bingham had your older brother already graduated from high school?

Ray: Oh, yeah. And he went on to the University of Utah. Now my sister got to go to Tooele because she was about three years younger than Gordon, so she was still around to go to Tooele. She hadn't been there long. Well, she'd been there the year before. She'd been there a year, then September, October, November of 1929. So she had a little longer time in Tooele.

My brother Max was about the same way. The same time she went to Tooele, why, he went. Then when I got to fifth grade, why, I went. Me and Max had gone there. In fact, he played football for Tooele. But by the time I got to go, why, they had gone on. They were both at the University of Utah. So there were three of them at the University of Utah at the same time.

KI: Then it was 1929. So did your dad have any problems then? You were in Bingham; the copper mine wouldn't have shut down because of the Depression, would it? Did he do okay during the Depression?

Ray: Well, no. Because Dad had got this silicosis, bad thing, he said, "Whatever it takes, if it kills me, I want all you kids to get an education because I don't want any of you to have to work in the mines and have this problem I've got." So from the day we can remember, it was known that we were going to do something, we were going to college and do something.

He wasn't making an awful lot of money and they really skimped. Mother and Dad went without a lot of things to see that we could get to college. As a matter of fact, he drove this little Model T Ford that he'd had. It was made in 1917 and here it was 1929 and he was still driving that little Model T Ford and they were just about extinct at that time. He'd drive it up the street and the kids would holler, "Park that thing and get a horse!" It was kind of humiliating to even drive that thing along, but they just sacrificed everything they could and because of Depression times, it was hard to get steady work. But we all worked. While I was going to school I worked for J.C. Penney's and Skaggs and Johnson Market.

KI: In Bingham?

Ray: Yes. I delivered handbills. When I was a little older so I could get a job on the copper company, I got summer jobs with them and with the Utah Power and Light and with construction companies.

KI: In those days, when you made income like that, did you just turn all your money over to your parents?

Ray: No. We put it in the bank, then when we'd go to college, we'd draw it out and it didn't take long. See, the daily salary, on track gang because I had no skills of any kind, you know, so on these construction companies, I'd do night watchman or cleaning the trucks and steam shovels and things like that. In the daytime, I'd haul tools into the shop for sharpening, and haul the dynamite around to the people that handled that. But the daily pay was \$3.20, per day. For eight hours. That didn't go very far. It would get us through the first semester is all. Then it was gone.

Dad and Mother had been frugal from the day they were married and had been putting some money away into what was called a Building and Loan Association. I don't know how it worked, they'd get the money back sometime. When everybody ran out of money and we were still in school and there were no resources, they cashed that in. My older brother, particularly at that time, was the one that needed it.

He wanted to go into medicine, but he decided that that was too long and too expensive and there was no money to do it. And the folks said, "If you'll stick it out, we'll stick with you until the last." That wasn't the last thing they did, but it was the next to the last. They sold that and they got about a dollar out of ten on it. It was practically nothing, but it helped. The next thing they did, they'd been buying a lot in Magna that they wanted to build on when they retired. They sold that lot. They had nothing.

KI: Except four educated children.

Ray: They were mighty proud about that.

KI: That's a great legacy and here you are telling me about it today, see, so we'll keep their memory alive.

Ray: God bless them.

KI: Absolutely. Well, tell me about your high school. What did you do in high school that you liked to do?

Ray: I had a lot of fun in high school. I went out for football and the first night out I broke a rib.

KI: This was in the days when you didn't have a lot of padding, right?

Ray: No, there wasn't, and it was a dirt field with pebbles all over it. It wasn't just soft dirt or sand or anything like that. It wasn't lawn. It was dirt with rocks on it. The way I broke the rib, this John Pollock was the best player the team ever had while I was in school, and I tackled him. I had his legs here like that and he fell forward and I fell on his feet. Those hard shoes just dug in me and cracked a rib here. I think it was probably a good thing, because I needed to get work instead of sports. So I gave up right then. As a matter of fact, I did wait until Dr. Frazier told me it was okay to go back and try again, which I did. I went on the football field and held the ball up and went to make a drop kick and I give a mighty kick and, wow, that thing popped, and it wasn't healed. It just snapped again. So then I gave up.

But, like I say, it was good, because I went up to town and got a job after school. I always had a job. At Christmas time I'd get jobs at J.C. Penney's, but most of the time I'd work at

Skaggs. I don't know if they still have Skaggs anymore, it turned into Safeway. It was Skaggs, then Skaggs-Safeway, and then Safeway. I worked for them.

I'd work long, long hours. On payday, those miners would stock up for two weeks or a month. So the terrible combination was when payday would come on a Saturday and that Saturday was a day or two before Christmas. We'd start at 5 o'clock in the morning and still be going after midnight delivering. We delivered at those times. In the winter, the mountains that steep and homes, homes, homes clear up to the top and stairways to the top, carrying a crate of groceries, it was a job. When it would snow, our pants were just frozen with ice.

The crux of that thing was that after I'd quit working for Safeways, some of the officials came out and wanted to interview me. They asked me a lot of questions about how much he paid me, I won't mention his name, but he's dead now. They wanted to know how much he paid me and how he went about paying me; when he signed the voucher, after he gave me the money or before he gave me the money, all those questions. They never told me exactly how much, but they let me know that he'd been paying himself a lot more than he was ever paying me. He'd have me sign that he'd paid me and I'd sign that, but there were no figures there. Then he'd fill it out and it was for a lot more than he was paying me. But they never volunteered to make up the difference.

KI: I was afraid that was going to be the end of the story. That's too bad.

Ray: Well, he lost his job. By that time, he'd already moved to Salt Lake and was a manager of a Safeway store in Salt Lake, but they fired him. What happened, and this was at least a year after I'd quit there, so what happened to bring this all to a head that long after the fact, I don't know. But that always left a kind of a bitter taste. I liked the guy because he'd always give me a job.

KI: Because he was taking half your salary!

Ray: Yeah, he was doing that. It might have been half or more. I don't know how much, but they said it was significantly more than I was getting.

KI: What subjects did you like when you were in high school?

Ray: In high school I liked geometry and English and auto mechanics, if you can imagine that. I was thinking about when I was in Ophir. In Ophir I liked spelling and math, as much math as we had by fifth grade, I always liked it. When we got to geometry, I liked that. I didn't care much for algebra, but I kind of blamed the teacher for not knowing how to teach me.

The sorry thing that happened was that the school board went broke the year I was taking algebra and they had to shut down all of Jordan District a month or more early. So I was never given a certification that I'd ever had algebra. When I got to the university, I had to start with Algebra I, which was the same algebra I would have had in high school. But in college I got an A in that algebra, the same one that I had a dickens of a time with in high school. So I really think the teacher didn't know how to put the material across so I could understand it.

KI: Did you do well in high school, in general?

Ray: In high school, yeah. I don't think I made the honor roll more than a time or two, but I really wasn't trying. I was having too much fun with a lot of things, band, glee club and Miners' Club. I was with the group that started the Miners' Club.

KI: What did you do with that?

Ray: We'd have treks occasionally. We'd got to Liberty Park or the teacher that was the sponsor of it would organize a party over in Copperton Park, or things like that. We'd arrange to have some kind of a program number on the assemblies and things of that kind. It was fun.

We started a glee club the year I was a freshman. I liked to sing. I got in the band, played a sousaphone. I started that earlier when we were going to school up in Bingham Canyon proper, before we went to Copperton, on a tuba that would go around and sit across your lap. But the one I had in Copperton was one of these big things with the bell out here, you know. We'd go places on parades and things like that, marching, and here's this big old thing. The guy next to me had a little flute and he'd always ridicule me, carrying that big thing along. He had this little flute or piccolo.

This vocal club, I suggested a name and they chose that to call us: the Vocalodeons. And we didn't have enough money to actually print a newspaper, but we made a form of a newspaper. We had the pictures formed out and the different columns and different size type and everything, then we just put them on a big, long bulletin board. We had different writers to write articles and others would submit photographs. We'd just put the actual photograph in place. So I suggested a name for that, Copper Dust, and the teacher that was the backbone behind that thought that was wonderful, so we called the paper the Copper Dust. As a matter of fact, I think she liked me pretty good. She told the class one time that I was her "pride and joy."

KI: That's fun!

Ray: Yeah. The high school years were really hectic. I lived in Ophir where we were so isolated, and I didn't get any of the childhood diseases. I didn't have the measles, the mumps, the chickenpox or any of those darn things. But I got them all in my junior year in high school and I was junior class president at the same time, and we had the junior prom to put on. It was the first year we decided we could afford a yearbook, so I was on the yearbook committee. We'd have assemblies planned and I was the master of ceremony for the assemblies. I'd get these funny things and I'd run down to see Dr. Frazier and he'd say, "You've got chickenpox, go on home." Or "You've got the measles or the mumps." I had them all that year. It really intruded on a lot of the fun, but I still had a lot because of being class president. I got into a lot of things.

I think we put on the nicest junior prom that they'd had there for a long, long time. We had decided that when they promenaded, we'd choose a queen and the queen would march at the head of the procession with the class president, so that was going to be me.

The first day at school at Bingham, I had met Helen. She was on her way home after school, and I caught up with her, and we had a very brief conversation and all of a sudden she disappeared. I looked to see where she'd gone and she'd taken off and up some steps into her house. It was right off the sidewalk. Anyway, I kind of liked her and we've been kind of like that forever, and that was 1929. Can you figure out how many years that's been? We were married in '38.

KI: Did she end up being the prom queen?

Ray: She ended up being prom queen, but we decided we had to raise money.

KI: Why?

Ray: We wanted the best prom we'd ever had. So we wanted to hire the best band we could get out of Salt Lake City and the best decorations and all. The prom was going to be on Friday the thirteenth. So that was the theme, unlucky stuff and whatnot, all decorated in white and black and broken mirrors and ladders and upside horseshoes. You had to walk under a ladder to get into the place. It was going to take a lot of money.

So I thought there were a couple things: I've got to get the money and, somehow, Helen's got to be the queen because I don't want to be promenading with anybody else. So in the class meeting, prom committee, I suggested that we sell tickets to the prom and each person that sold a ticket would get one vote on the queen. They thought that was pretty good, we'll raise a lot of money and we'll get quite a bit of interest.

So we decided that there would be a committee eliminate all the nominations because we knew there would be a lot of them. Everybody would nominate their girlfriends and so forth. So this committee would somehow eliminate down to about five competitors. Then the selection from there would depend on the votes from selling tickets. So as soon as we decided that would be the procedure, I went right out, same day, and started selling tickets. I went to Lark and to Herriman, and I went to Copperfield, then I went to Highland, and went to **US??** and Bingham proper and canvassed every door.

KI: At the time anybody could come to the prom, right? You guys were in charge of it, but the whole community could come to the prom?

Ray: Oh, yes, the whole community was invited. In fact we had a little booth, all decorated. They'd select, every year, some special seniors from community to be... I forget what we called them. Honorary people, anyway. This year it was a Dr. Paul Richards and his wife that had that position. So the public was invited to come.

I sold tickets beau coup. I had money coming out of my ears. So I come to the polling booth and they said, "How many votes have you got?" I got my money bag and poured out two or three hundred dollars in tickets there. That was much more than anybody else had. She got a lot of other votes besides mine, so there was no contest really. Anyway, we led the promenade.

KI: When you were a senior were you also in student government?

Ray: No, I ran for student body president and I didn't win. Some of the other students wanted me to be their campaign manager, so I worked for some other students, Pete Spiros, for instance, was running for office for something. Of course, he won. No, I was defeated. I think they'd had enough of me. They figured I had too many tricks up my sleeve.

KI: When did you graduate?

Ray: 1935. We moved to Bingham in 1929 and I was still in the sixth grade. See, I'd only had three months of sixth grade in Tooele and moved to Bingham in sixth grade. In Bingham Canyon I went to seventh and eighth grade, then the new high school was ready when the fall came to start. So mine was the first class that went all the way through the new high school, from ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, all in that new high school.

It was deficient in the fact that they ran out of money before they built the auditorium. So they didn't have an auditorium, so all the productions we put on was in the gymnasium. But it was kind of a nice gymnasium. They didn't accommodate many seats on the main floor for games, just mainly the teams and officials and whatnot. Then up a little higher, in the balcony, the seats went back, oh, ten or fifteen rows. So there was plenty of accommodation there for pretty sizeable groups for the school plays and operettas and things of that kind. I did participate both in seventh and eighth grade and in high school.

KI: Did you sing in operettas?

Ray: Yes. I never did have the lead part. They wanted tenor guys for those parts, but I could sing bass. If they had any occasion for a bass singer, why, I'd sing. I sang a solo or two, here and there, but I've loved to sing since I can remember. When I was just a little kid, my parents would have me sing to entertain them. I love to sing in the shower and bathtub and anywhere I can sing. But I sound best if I'm singing with a quartet or something like that. I don't have a solo voice. In fact, right now I don't have a voice of any kind.

KI: After you graduated, you went to the University of Utah?

Ray: Yes.

KI: Did all of your brothers and your sister graduate from the U of U?

Ray: Yes.

KI: When did you decided you wanted to go into medicine?

Ray: Probably the day my older brother decided he wanted to go into medicine. He'd wanted to go into medicine, but he didn't talk much about it because he just figured that was beyond all reach. Mother and Dad could see how much it was eating on him. He had signed up and taken a few quarters. They sat down with him and said, "You apply for medicine, you start out and get the undergraduate things you need for medicine. Somehow we're going to get you through. There's no need to go into engineering. If you want to be a doctor, be a doctor." So when he decided to go that way, I thought, "Well, if he can do it, I can do it." Everything he did, I wanted to do.

When he went down to Richfield, he was real nice about writing letters home. I just hungered and waited for those letters. I knew everything he did. I knew all the lyrics to all the songs in the operettas he was in. I knew all his friends by first and last name, where they lived and everything about them. In fact, for his ninety-fifth birthday recently, I sent a videotape and

told him all about those things. I named all his buddies from high school, you know, and his girlfriends and all the things he used to do. I thanked him for being my guiding star. I didn't have that dilemma that most kids have deciding what the dickens to do, there's so many things to choose from. I knew. I didn't have that worry at all; I knew.

KI: Was he helpful to you when you were going through medical school?

Ray: No, he had gone through medical and was practicing up in Seattle.

KI: He was a long ways away.

Ray: Yeah, he was nine years ahead of me, so he was long gone. So he wasn't anywhere where he could give me anything except moral support.

KI: Did he specialize?

Ray: Yeah. Up in Seattle, he took his internship up in Seattle, then he stayed on and took a surgical residency. So then he went into private practice as a surgeon in Seattle. Then when World War II came along, he volunteered. I guess he volunteered, because he had a family then. So he went into the military. He never did leave the shores of this country, but he was in military hospitals from Texas to Florida, all over the place.

KI: How long did it take you to finish school?

Ray: I graduated in 1942 from medical school.

KI: So you and Helen were already married?

Ray: Yes, I married my first year in medical school and I've got to tell you this story. When she graduated high school she went to LDS Business College. Of course, I started at the U. Then she graduated from the course she was taking and went to work for the Utah State government, up at the state capitol. Of course, I was still up at school. In my first year in medicine, which was actually my fourth year of college, I'd gotten enough credits to apply for medical school so that I could get in there my fourth year, which was actually my first year in medical school.

So we decided we'd get married during the Thanksgiving break. So we'd gone to the bishop and got all the plans made for that. As it got pretty close to that date, we got word, it came down from the headquarters of the Church, that the temple was going to close before Thanksgiving and it would be closed well into the next year for remodeling. So we had to move that date up. So we picked a Friday. I figured I could go to school Friday and get down to the temple and we'd get married.

So that's what we did. I left my last class with my books and big briefcase and caught the streetcar and went down to the temple. Her aunt had taken her there and my father and mother were there. They'd come in that old Model T Ford, so they were waiting there, and we were married.

All at once there were dozens and dozens of couples that had the same problem. They

wanted to get married during Thanksgiving or Christmas and they were all moving it up. This particular night, oh, you've never seen such a mob. I thought we'd never get out of that place. It was after one o'clock in the morning when we got out. We were never sure whether we were married on the twenty-first of the twenty-second because it took so long getting out of there.

KI: You started on the twenty-first.

Ray: We started on the twenty-first and that's what the certificate says. But I'm sure it must have been the twenty-second. We'd have left there before one-thirty if it had been the twenty-first.

KI: Did you have a party or anything?

Ray: Her aunt had planned a little reception and had some things to serve, but we were so weary and tired. We went to her place and she served, but everybody wanted to get home. We were just tired to death, so it was just a very brief little get-together afterwards. We had a non-LDS friend, Robert Colyar, who couldn't go in and he was quite a bit older than us, but he had taken us under his wing, so to speak, and was real friendly. He wanted to be part of it. So when we came out, he was waiting out there with a bouquet of roses. He'd been waiting there since about eight o'clock. He thought it was going to be a short thing.

KI: So did you!

Ray: He was about dead tired, too. So the next Monday we were having mid-term tests at school. I had the weekend for a honeymoon and preparations for Monday's tests. As a matter of fact, she mentions this wherever we go, we actually had a skeleton in the closet, and we did.

KI: You were doing anatomy, huh?

Ray: Yep, and anatomy was one of the things we had tests on on Monday. A lot of people have cute little remarks about that one. They said, "Well, you had a good subject to work on over the weekend! Learn your anatomy!"

KI: Did she have an apartment where she was living that you moved into?

Ray: No, we just picked out a place we could afford. It was totally unsatisfactory. We were only there a couple of days. [The next place] was in a home and it wasn't a brand new home, but they'd made a nice little apartment. The apartment was brand new that they'd made up in the attic. It was real small. We were the first ones to live in. It was tiny, but it was cute and neat and clean. The reason we fizzled on this first place, and we didn't have much time to look and hunt for a place, but we had to share the bathroom. It was a door on this side and a door here. We had to share that common bathroom. Well, the first day, somebody used it on that side and forgot to unlock it here. So, there were problems right off the bat. We decided, "We're not staying here another night. We're not going to put up with that kind of stuff."

So anyway, we got that [other] little place. The size of it, it had a pull-out bed and when it pulled out, it came out into the kitchen and it was right up almost right to the kitchen door, so

there wasn't room to squeeze out along there. I had a friend called George **Casser??** . I've got his obituary notice out there on the table, he just recently died. He and I would study at night. Sometimes the sun would come up in the morning and shine in the window on us. But when he'd go home, he'd have to climb over that half of the bed to get out of there to go home. As soon as we'd start to study, of course there was no TV then, you couldn't have anything that made much noise and distract us anyway, so she'd just go to bed early. Sundown or later, she'd go to bed. So, he'd have to climb out over that pull-out bed to get out of there.

KI: It sounds like that whole apartment could fit in your living room, huh?

Ray: Oh, yeah. Little tiny bathroom. It had a cute bathtub, but that's about the best we can say about it. It was cute. A little kitchen.

KI: Did Helen continue to work for the state while you were in medical school?

Ray: Yes, she worked there until we left. I only took two years in Utah. Until about 1950, '47 or '50, it was after the World War that Utah started teaching the last two years of medical school. It was only two years until then. So as soon as we finished two years, we had to find another place. Since my brother had been to Louisville, Kentucky, that's where I applied and was accepted. We put all we could put in some luggage bags and got on a Greyhound bus and went to Louisville.

We had no arrangements there. We had no place to stay or anything. So we parked our belongings and went and looked for someplace to stay. We found a place over a movie theater, right in the heart of Louisville. It was up three flights of stairs and we could hear the movie. Under our floor was the ceiling of the movie theater.

They had, not crickets, but roaches. Oh, we'd never had any trouble like that before so we were just heartsick about the cockroaches. But the branch president of the church, Herman Bowman, had an awning factory out in the outskirts. He came to visit us and saw the situation and he said, "You kids don't need to live here. I've got a lot of space up over my awning shop. I'll build you an apartment there."

He went right to work and in a couple of weeks he had a bedroom and a kitchen and we had to share a bathroom there, again, with him, and we opened out onto the roof of his business. We had kind of a porch out there and it was brand new, everything was new. But they were a godsend to us. That's where we lived until I graduated in Louisville.

When I finished in medical school, I signed up for an internship there as well. So we were still there.

KI: You went into general practice, right?

Ray: Yeah, when I came out of the war and I came back to Vernal, I went into general practice. I had applied for a residency in OB/GYN, but the war, due to the atomic bomb, came to a halt so abruptly. I thought we were going to be fighting the Japs for a long time. So here suddenly Nagasaki and Hiroshima and the war's over. As soon as I could get my wits about me, I got an amoebic dysentery and was hospitalized in Japan. By the time I could get applications out, and I didn't have addresses or anything, I'd send home to get addresses of all these places, I sent applications. The best offer I got was for a two-year delay. They had backlogs of applications for

at least two years.

So, this family doctor in Bingham, Dr. R.G. Frazier, he was well known in Vernal. He knew Rice Cooper and he knew Henry Millecam and he knew Dr. Eskelson.

KI: Wasn't this the Dr. Frazier that used to come out here and run the river?

Ray: Yeah, he was.

KI: Thanks. I've read about him.

Ray: Well, he went with Admiral Bird to Antarctica and set up Little America. He was the surgeon with that endeavor. He had run all the rivers in the United States and he knew the Hatches here very well.

KI: That's where I read about him was in connection with the Hatches.

Ray: Yeah, in fact, he'd see patients once in a while when he was out here. Anyway, he said, "Dr. Eskelson is just absolutely going crazy out there." They had the oil boom. He wrote me three letters, one to Dr. Eskelson, one to Rice Cooper and one to Henry Millecam. I don't know if you knew those.

KI: Henry Millecam was a mayor and Rice Cooper had Vernal Drug.

Ray: Yes, and Millecam had this Dinosaur Motel. He was the one that had the pink dinosaur originally. I think he maybe give me a letter to Don Showalter, the one that had the automobile [dealership] before his son. Anyway, I stayed the first night in Vernal, when I came out to see Dr. Eskelson, with his mother.

KI: Showalter's mother?

Ray: Yeah, with Don's mother. I took these letters around and met all these people. When I went in to Dr. Eskelson's office, his waiting room wasn't very big, about like this here, but it was packed. There were some seats, but more people were standing than there were seats and they were just waiting. He begged me to go into one of the offices and start working right then. I said, "Well, I've got a family. I've got a daughter that's a year and half old that I haven't seen." She was born while I was New Guinea.

KI: Where were they? Where did they spend the war?

Ray: In Bingham. Her parents lived there and my parents lived there.

KI: So, you hadn't gone back to Bingham before you came to Vernal?

Ray: No, no. Well, I had come from the war to Bingham because my parents were still there and her parents were there. She'd been living in a little apartment next to her parents, so she had

some independence and whatnot. So, I just went into the little apartment she already had and spent Christmas there, then started looking around for a job. Then I came from there because of Dr. Frazier.

KI: Oh, I thought you said you hadn't seen your daughter yet. I didn't understand.

Ray: I hadn't seen her until she was a year and a half old.

KI: And you weren't ready to leave her.

Ray: Well, yeah. She was still in Bingham with my wife and I came out to look Vernal over and he wanted me to stay. And I said, "Well, I've got to get my wife and daughter and get some civilian clothes." I was still in uniform then. So he said, "Go get her and get back as fast as you can." He was really a weary man. He was seeing more patients. The best he could do was sit down and write them a prescription for something. He didn't have time to do much examining or anything else. It wasn't fair to him and it wasn't fair to his patients. Cutting that in half with me coming wasn't a whole lot better because it was still just swamped.

KI: Can we go back and will you tell me about being in the war before we forget about it? But first, what year did you come here after the war?

Ray: I came here about the first of February 1946.

KI: Then Dr. Seager came just a few months later?

Ray: Yes, now he was in Bingham, too. He was in Bingham and he worked in Dr. Richards' hospital. In fact, this Dr. Richards delivered this daughter of mine, Leslie. My wife got to know Dr. Seager's wife, Dorothy. She was a nurse there. So, they got associated and she'd visit at the Seagers' home, got to know him. So, when I came out here and saw this rat race, I thought, "Who else can we get?" Because I wasn't enough. I knew him, I'd met him; and she knew them well. So, I called him on the phone and told him about the situation here and invited him to come out and he did. He spent a little time and explored the mountains.

KI: The mountains, that was the first draw for him.

Ray: He thought, "Boy, this is just a wonderful place." So, he decided to come right then. As a matter of fact, many times during the years following, I've had occasions in different meetings, Lions Club, Kiwanis Club and whatever it might happen to be, to either introduce him or make comments somewhat about Dr. Seager. I'd say, "You know, I brought Dr. Seager into the world." They knew he was a little older than I was, so they'd chuckle about it." I'd say, "No, I'm serious, I really brought him into the world of the Uinta Basin, and he loved it, and he stayed here, and it's the best thing I ever did for this community was bring Dr. Seager here." I had a running joke with that story, that I'd brought him into the world. It always got a little laugh.

KI: That's great. So, let's go back and talk about the war for a while. You were in the

paratroopers, right?

Ray: Right.

KI: Why did you decide to do that?

Ray: Well, when I was interning, they paid me \$9 a month and, of course, my wife was working at Seagram's in Louisville. She had a pretty good job, secretarial job, operating what was the forerunner of the computer in that day, punch machines, if you're familiar with those. Those kinds of things were the precursors of the computers. So she was working there, but I was making a whole \$9 a month. I was deferred from the Army until I graduated and completed an internship, then the Army says, "We want you!"

There was no question about me ever not wanting to go and do my job. I was sent to Carlisle Barracks. I had to wait a little while because there were so many doctors piling up they couldn't accommodate them. So I worked at the induction center in Salt Lake City examining new inductees until September. Then I went to Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania. It was a school just to train doctors when they came in so they would understand the military. It was just three weeks there.

While I was there at Carlisle Barracks, the military came around with training films. One of them was to invite us to volunteer for the paratroops. One of the advantages to the paratroops was that the officers would get an extra \$100 a month for what they called jump pay. The enlisted men got an extra \$50. After \$9 that sounded like a lot of money. We'd been living pretty skimpily. So I thought an extra hundred bucks wouldn't hurt. I can't remember what the salary was when I went in as a First Lieutenant. They capped it later. I can't remember what that base pay was, but I can remember that hundred bucks. I volunteered, but I thought, "How am I going to tell Helen?" She was still in Bingham. So I didn't tell her.

When we graduated in three weeks, there were five hundred of us in the group, five hundred doctors. They turned them out maybe every two weeks, that many. That was the thing that showed me the enormity of this war when they would take that many doctors every couple of weeks. Something big going on somewhere, you know?

Anyway, from Carlisle I went to Fort Benning, in Georgia, that's where the parachute training school was. The Army wanted to communicate with me and they sent the communication to Bingham. So the cat was out of the bag that I was in the paratroops. So she wasn't very happy with me. Anyway, I invited her to come down to Georgia because I knew I'd be there four weeks. Parachute training has A, B, C, D stages. As it turned out for me, it turned out to be more like seven weeks because the first week was so terribly difficult. Having been a student for so many years, I was softer than a pigeon, you know.

Most of the volunteers in the paratroops were people who had at least been through basic training somewhere else. Many of them had been in different military units anywhere in the world and had volunteered and they'd sent them there. So a lot of them had been in the military for a short time or long time. There weren't many there as soft as I was.

The first week started with all this physical exercise, running and tumbling and push-ups and everything you can think physical. I couldn't keep up in this run. They'd run for an hour steady and then they'd double time, then they'd run. I couldn't do it. As a matter of fact, before I even started, they invited me to skip all that. They said, "We're short on doctors and the reason

we're short is that they start this thing, then they give up. They take back their volunteer, they don't want this." They said, "We can't have that. So if you want to skip all this stuff and go into D stage where you actually do some jumping, you can."

KI: But you'd get hurt, wouldn't you?

Ray: Yeah. I said, "Not for me. If we're going to be in combat and I've got to follow these guys wherever they go, I want to be able to keep up with them. I need to go through this, whatever it takes." I said, "If you're willing to work with me and be a little patient and let me take what time it takes, I'll get through it. But I don't want to go through it and not qualify."

So they let me do that. I went at my own pace, going as hard as I figured I could go before I quit. So I took A stage again. Then I was so physically worn I couldn't even get into B stage. So they let me go through A stage again, but just taking it as I could, you know. They made arrangements with the drill sergeant that if I had to drop out, that was okay. They let me drop out, then get back in when I could. Finally, I got through A stage after three weeks.

Then B stage, that was a lot easier. We still had physical activities, all the way through, but it got easier. Then C stage was easier still. We had to learn to fold our own parachutes, the chute we jumped with, we had to fold it, so we had to make sure it was good and right. D stage we had to make five jumps, four in the daytime and one at night.

So night time came and then was a captain that had already been in some other military unit. He was planning on being the first one out, to be a medical officer, the first one, then eighteen men behind him. I was going to be in plane number two, the first one out, then eighteen men behind me. Some snafu [happened] on the signals when to jump and he missed the signal and I was the first one out with my stick, we called them. He was pretty unhappy about it because somebody snafued. He didn't get to be the first one out. That's the story of jump school.

KI: How do you feel about jumping out of airplanes?

Ray: The first one was the easiest, I think. After that, I knew what was going to happen and it was a little spooky. It was an exhilaration that you don't get too many ways. I got a few bumps on the head. I was reading in one of the later bulletins from the 511 Parachute Infantry, the guy describing his jumping. He did about the same thing I did. The parachutes are mounted on your back. There's a cable from that that we hook up to a cable running the full length of the airplane, so we hook that up. Then there's a reserve chute here on your chest. In case something goes haywire with that one, we can pull a ring on this one and this one deploys. It's a smaller one, but it will get you to the ground.

When you jump out the door, you just fall for a while until that webbing comes to the end of the line, then it jerks the cover off the back of your parachute, pulls the cover off and the parachute is tied to that. So it pulls the parachute out, too, and the prop blast from the propellers hits that parachute and inflates it immediately and it opens with a bang; it sounds like a rifle shot. It stops you suddenly. You're traveling at the speed of the plane and they try to slow down to about 120 miles an hour. So you're traveling that far, falling, and suddenly you're stopped. That's a real shake when you go from 120 to zero like that.

But as this thing goes off, it pulls your pack out and it knocked my helmet and it went clear down over my face, you know. I'm trying to get that thing off my face so I could see.

Because what you try to do when you come in is to come in forward. You don't want to land sideways or, particularly, backwards because you have no control and you don't know what you're hitting and you might smack your head into something. So you reach up here on these risers, they call them, and you can pull and turn to where you're coasting. As you coast into the ground, you're coming in head first.

Sometimes I didn't make it; I came in backwards. As a matter of a fact, sometimes you're oscillating. That parachute's up here and you're down here and it's swinging you as you're descending. If you land on a swing forward, that's not so bad, but if you're way up here and come to the ground and you fall down and come in, it's as bad as coming in backwards; you land on the back of your head. So I did that a few times. I got the helmet knocked over my head a few times.

KI: You wouldn't know if that was going to happen, would you?

Ray: No. It depends on just the position you are. If the thing deploys this way, it might take your helmet with it. If it deployed out that way, it would miss your helmet. It depended on the position of your body at the instant the parachute opened whether the parachute was out this way or this way or over your head and take the helmet with it.

KI: It's very interesting. You were attached to a group in the Pacific, right?

Ray: I was right with the men. When they were in their foxholes right there, I was in my foxhole right here. I was no different than anybody else.

KI: Did they train you to use your weapon?

Ray: Yep. They had us on the firing range a lot. I've got a ringing in my ears today; I've had it ever since New Guinea from firing weapons on the firing range, and something happened. I got an extra-loud charge by me. My ears have rung ever since.

You know, in the European theater and other places the medics didn't carry weapons. It was against the Geneva convention, but the Japanese didn't respect that at all. So the medics in the Pacific carried weapons. I carried a whole variety of them at different times. I had my choice of what I wanted, so I tried a lot of them. I wound up with a .45 pistol. I wasn't actively engaged in trying to shoot at anybody, but there were a few times when somebody out there needed what they called 'cover.' They were going out and we'd just fire any way except where he was. I fired my weapon a few times that way just for cover for somebody.

KI: You were in New Guinea. Where else were you?

Ray: Well, in New Guinea we did jungle training there a lot. Then in November of '44, by the way, my daughter was born while we were in New Guinea, 19th of July 1944. They sent a telegram notifying me. I didn't get it until the last day of July. The telegram went to Australia, then it was sent to New Guinea. I don't know where all it traveled around before it got to me. But it was the last of July when I got word. Then they shipped us to Leyte, where the return of MacArthur to the Philippines was just occurring.

KI: Let me ask a quick question. What was your battalion and group?

Ray: I had different assignments. If somebody got hurt or injured in one battalion, they may change me to his battalion. But I was with the Third Battalion, I think, most of the time. The regiment was the 511th Parachute Infantry. The division was the 11th Airborne Division. The airborne divisions and regiments and all of it was much smaller than the regular Army, like the regular infantry, they were vastly larger in numbers. The Airborne Division included those that come in gliders, engineers and a lot of other things.

But the parachute regiment was strictly all parachutists and it was much smaller than ordinary regiments. The battalions were smaller and the companies were smaller. They had to be something that they could get up and go in a hurry if they wanted you somewhere. They couldn't move a division of airborne very fast if they were in those tremendous numbers that the other units were.

KI: So, you went into Leyte.

Ray: We went to Leyte. The first time I'd had good food and shelter for a long time. Traveling on those boats up there was kind of like heaven because we ate at tables that had silverware and tablecloths and they served ice cream and all that stuff. I thought, "Boy, I'd like to live this kind of life forever."

KI: What were you eating when you were in New Guinea?

Ray: Well, when they finally got the mess tents set up, we'd eat dehydrated potatoes and dehydrated whatever, rice. They'd cook up different things, but most of it was cooking up and warming over dehydrated stuff. If we went on a training maneuver, we'd eat K-rations, which were packaged in little cardboard boxes about like a pound of butter. They had a whole mixture of different things in there. C-rations we'd eat around camp a lot. They were in cans and you could open them with a can opener. We'd have biscuits and dried cakes and some meat dishes and vegetables, things like that.

KI: But it wasn't ice cream.

Ray: No, it wasn't ice cream! It wasn't served on china, on tables with really nice-looking napkins and things of that sort. Those people on the ships, they really lived it up.

But anyway, as we went in, there were air battles going on overhead. The little P-38 was a very fast little fighter plane that had two fuselages, if you remember anything like that. One wing, that from this side there was a fuselage, and this side, then the propeller right in the middle. It was fast. We'd see those little Japanese Zeros, put-put-put-put along up there and here would come one of these P-38s, and just pass it like that, you know, like it was standing still. Pretty soon you'd see them spiraling down into the bay. That was our first sight of war. They were falling thick and fast, those Zeros. The P-38s were just so much faster.

They were trying some of the Kamikaze, they would try to come down into a ship. I was on what they call a landing ship, infantry. It was one of those things where they run you up to the

beach and drop the lid and you all walk off onto the beach. They were going to move us up the bay a little ways and one of these planes came over. There was a ship right off our right side. It was obvious he was coming for that ship. Ack-ack was exploding in the air. They were trying to shoot him down. Whether he got hit or not, I don't know, but he missed the ship. If this is the ship and he's coming like that, somehow he got turned.

Begin Tape 365

Ray: Right where it came down, there was an outrigger canoe, full of natives. They'd come out to these ships and they'd get the soldiers on board, up on the deck, to throw coins into the water, then they'd dive down and retrieve these coins. So that's what they were doing. I don't know how many. There were a few men and a few women diving for these coins. This plane missed the ship and it got turned sideways and it came right down and hit right into that outrigger canoe. When the smoke and the water and all cleared away, there was nothing but trash left on the water. It got that outrigger and everybody in it. It was just demolished.

KI: It must be a very hard thing to see as a doctor.

Ray: Yeah, I've seen so many people get killed and mutilated, terrible things happen. It's not a nice thing.

KI: I read in some information that we already have at the library an interview you did with Shannon O'Neil, a student.

Ray: Oh, yes, that was an assignment he had, to interview me.

KI: In it you were talking about a mountain expedition when the rain was really bad.

Ray: That was in Leyte.

KI: The thing that bothered me the most when I read through that was that you talked about the military not getting in to get your supplies to you, nor did they evacuate the wounded and you were forced to carry them with you.

Ray: Yeah, I remember that. It wasn't that they were derelict in their duty or anything like that. It was just weather mainly. All these men had spent all these months training for paratroops in anticipation that they were going to jump into battle, their first battle. But in Leyte, we didn't do that at all. We went in by foot. As a matter of fact, our assignment was to go up these mountains, like looking at Mount Timpanogos, only much, much higher and much more rugged cliffs and even rivers up there, pretty sizeable rivers. You can imagine a mountain range with rivers up that high. That's got to be quite a bit of water.

Of course, there was more rain than you can believe. We went in by foot, or hands and knees. We were climbing up cliffs and crawling.

KI: Why were you doing this?

Ray: Because there were Japs up there and we had an airport up here. So they had access for their long guns, their artillery, to fire on that airport and do any other damage they could. But the primary thing was to protect that airport. There were a lot of Japanese up there.

It comes down the other side and here's the ocean again over there. This piece of land projects out into the ocean, into the bay, Leyte Bay.

Okay, so we start up there and it takes us a few days to get in there very deep. The only casualties we had early on were from snipers that we never did see. They'd be in a coconut tree or something like that and we'd be progressing along, sometimes in single file, but we learned early on to stay dispersed so they couldn't come in with a machine gun and wipe out a whole bunch of you at a time. But these snipers would pick off one or two occasionally. We weren't equipped to take very good care of anybody. If somebody gets wounded and they've got to go along with the rest of them, they can't keep a battalion here waiting for them to get treated or get well. So you've got to deal with what they immediately need, then evacuate them. Now, the first maybe three days, we'd send a squad back with a stretcher to carry the wounded and we'd radio to send a squad to meet them and wherever they met, they'd take them on and these guys would come back.

But before long, it was too far back. You can't haul them, so you carry them with you. So pretty soon you've got a lot of people tied down carrying stretchers with wounded on them. You're also getting out of range of resupply. To compound the problems, out of the thirty-some-odd days we were up there, it rained probably twenty-five days, and foggy, till the planes that were supposed to fly over and drop supplies to us every day could never find us. There were only about four times in all that month that they could ever see us from the air. So they'd start dropping stuff, but because the Japanese were so close around us, if they missed us, the Japanese would get it. So to make sure it got to us, they'd try to come down low and drop it in a precise little area. But the thing that happened there is they were peeling off our men pretty regular with those things dropping on them, cases of food, cases of ammunition, medicine, that sort of things. So we lost quite a few of our people just from that.

KI: That's terrible.

Ray: Yeah. The other thing about the rain, every place we'd stop to stay overnight or any length of time, we'd have to immediately start digging foxholes. The rule was that as soon as darkness fell, you get in your foxhole and don't move. Anything that could be seen moving would be enemy and if you could see to do anything, you were supposed to kill them. Well, with the rain, if you've got a wounded man and you've dug a trench and put him in there, pretty soon, the foxhole was filling up with rain and if he isn't conscious enough to take care of himself, he's a dead man, he drowns in his foxhole, and we had several of them drown.

If a medic is needed, he can't do any good if he stays in his foxhole. If they throw in a hand grenade or if a mortar explodes overhead and showers down shrapnel and wounds somebody, they start calling "Medic! Medic! Help, medic!" So medics have to get out of there and go, regardless of the rule: "If anything moves, shoot it." So to try to save ourselves, we'd go crawling along saying, "The medic's coming, don't shoot! Medics, medics, medics coming, don't shoot!" You'd crawl on your belly in this rain.

If somebody's injured, imagine trying to take care of them in the rain and in the mud and

in a foxhole. You can't put a light on because then that gives them a target. So you call on a few other men, not the other medics because you don't want to tie them up just holding ponchos, so you'd get some of the other troops. Then you need one or two medics to help you do whatever you had to do for that wounded person. They'd hold ponchos or a tarp or something over you, so somebody inside could hold a flashlight so you could see what you were doing and not let any light leak out anywhere because as soon as a light would show up, they'd try to aim on that. What you could effectively do [was limited].

KI: How did you feel about that?

Ray: Oh, horrible, horrible!

KI: What is your psychological response to that?

Ray: It was enough to drive you crazy. It really was. You think, "He ought to be on an operating table. He ought to have sterile instruments. He ought to have this kind of care and general anaesthesia." All we had was morphine. We could give them a shot or two or three of morphine until it knocked the pain enough you could maybe take a sharp knife.

I had a foot, for instance, that was all but shot off. There was nothing there but some of the tendons that worked the toes, and that's all. I had to take a sharp knife and cut that foot off and throw it away. Then you can't do any real treatment of that stump, but at least you can get some kind of sterile dressing over it and get it on tight enough that it's going to stop the hemorrhage so he won't bleed to death. But there you're laying on your belly in the mud and trying to look in your pack to see what you've got to do with it. It's just unbelievable.

KI: And the fact that you'd find these people whose lives you were trying to save and they've drowned during the night because you couldn't get to them. That just sounds hellish.

Ray: We'd make the rounds in the daytime and there was sometimes more than one in the night that had drowned in their foxhole.

KI: How long did that go on?

Ray: Thirty days from the time we started up there until we started down. As a matter of fact, it was Christmas Day when we started down. Christmas Eve when we finally determined that we had most of the resistance under control up there.

KI: So you were successful, more or less, in that regard?

Ray: Yes. On Christmas Eve we kind of gathered around at the trail head at the top of the mountain, before starting down on the other side to catch boats and go back around where we started and it was the first time we'd had fire at night during all those weeks we were up there. They lit a fire and they sent a little Piper Cub over, some kind of a little plane, I call it a Piper Cub. It dropped leaflets with Christmas music.

KI: That was probably not so much what the troops were thinking about right then.

Ray: Well, I was. We did sing. They had *I'll Be Home For Christmas* and I couldn't do it. I had to walk away into the trees and sob a little bit.

KI: I can imagine that, I could sob now listening to your descriptions. Can you tell me what kind of medical materials you had?

Ray: Well, we had sulfa drugs and we had some penicillin, not much. We'd sprinkle sulfa powder on open wounds. We had gauze, which you couldn't pack in a musette bag, that's what we had our stuff in, a musette bag. You couldn't pack enough of that kind of material to last too long because if you get a leg shot off, it takes an awful lot of gauze and wrappings and compression and whatnot to control something that massive. You run pretty short. So you have to start using your old fatigues and shirts and stuff like that that you wouldn't wish on a pig.

KI: Infection must have been horrendous.

Ray: Yeah, it was hard.

KI: When were you wounded that you ended up with the Purple Heart?

Ray: This was on Luzon. After Leyte, we knew our next mission was going to be on the island of Luzon at Manila. So they took us by boats to the island of Mindoro, which was about halfway between Leyte and Luzon. So we were able to stage for the jump on Luzon [from] Mindoro. We tried to get organized. We'd lost quite a few men, so we had to get new men from somewhere. We'd lost quite a few officers, as a matter of a fact. So we had to get new officers. Some of them came from other parts of the division that weren't paratroopers.

In New Guinea, they tried to qualify everybody that would, in the division, to be a jumper. So a lot of people took jump training in New Guinea that were in other parts of the division. They might be engineers, they might be gliders or might be howitzers or whatever, and they took that training. So they replaced our men with those.

Anyway, we got all ready to go on Manila and in February, we got in our planes and took off from Manila.

KI: But this was February of '44 or '45?

Ray: This is '45, because we spent Christmas of '44 on Leyte, came down Christmas Day and we were there a while before we went to Mindoro to plan for Luzon. They told us we'd know when we were about two or three minutes from where we were supposed to jump when we flew over this very unique crater thing. It was a beautiful sight. Right in the middle of forest and all kinds of trees, lots of coconuts and everything, just beautiful. This whole valley was kind of surrounded by steep slopes that were all vegetated with beautiful vegetation and some pretty cliffs and whatnot. But we knew we were getting close when we flew over this crater.

KI: Was it an old volcano?

Ray: Yeah, a volcano. So here's this big volcano crater and it's full of water and I'm kind of color blind so it was just blue to me, but in descriptions somebody else has made of it, it was blue-green, he said, and beautiful. Inside the middle of that lake, this lake was called Lake Taal. I don't know how big that would be, maybe about a block or so. It was not a big lake, but it was called a lake. In the middle of that was another cone from the volcano and at the top of that was another crater and that was full of water. Not full to the top, but full up partway. Here's a little tiny lake inside a crater that's inside another lake. It was just a beautiful sight and the water was so lovely. Anyway, we were already standing up at the door with our parachutes hooked up. As soon as we flew over the lake where the terrain swept up Tagaytay Ridge, just another minute or two, we got the signal to jump and we jumped out on Luzon.

Nobody expected us and that's the way they'd planned it, you know. There were a few farmers around and they wondered what the dickens was going on. We couldn't talk to them, most of them. Most of the people we encountered there could speak English, but some of these farmers on the outskirts, they didn't speak English, so they didn't know what was going on, and they didn't help us much to tell us where the Japanese were.

So anyway, we headed for Manila. We didn't hit much resistance. We were marching on foot, we didn't have any transportation, everything was on foot where we'd go, until we got close to the outskirts of Manila. Then we started hitting these little pockets of resistance. We'd see these people streaming out of Manila. The wounded, they had arm slings and crutches and all kinds of patched up stuff, and carrying babies, and pushing little carts with their belongings. What happened, they tried to leave Manila, these Filipinos, and the Japs that had control would shoot them. So they were in a bad spot. They knew we were going to blow them up if they stayed, and they knew the Japs were going to blow them up if they tried to get away. A lot of them didn't make it, but there was quite a string of them that did, and they were a sorry sight.

Now, I never knew east from west or north from south, or where we were going or what we'd be doing. I just went where I was told to go. During this process, on the outskirts of Nichols Field, it's an airstrip, we wanted to get control of that airstrip. While we were dug in around that, and there was sniper fire and mortar and stuff like that going on pretty regular, but not intense, I heard over the headquarters radio a message from General MacArthur. Where he was at that time, I don't know. He was at some headquarters somewhere. It says, "General MacArthur has just announced that Nichols Field has been taken and is under US control now."

KI: And you were all very surprised, I'm sure.

Ray: We were still fighting that! About five minutes after I heard that message, I heard this plane coming overhead and looked up and it was one of our own C-47 planes. That's the kind of plane we jumped out of. It's a pretty big plane. It can carry sixty or seventy people, you can crowd them in there. I don't know what it had aboard, but anyway, it came in. It was just coming in so nice and easy, and bing! Here was an explosion and the right wing just went sailing up into the air. It keeled over and went headfirst, crashed into the runway.

I've just imagined that that pilot maybe got the same message on his radio, that Nichols Field was secure and safe now to use. So he comes in unsuspectingly and boom! I don't know, I might be wrong to have those feelings about MacArthur, you know. We knew from previous experience that he was premature on his announcements a lot of times, because he would

announce that something had been taken and we knew it hadn't. I don't know why he'd do it, but anyway, it happened more than once, so I figured this was one of those occasions.

When I was telling you about these planes that fly over and drop these rations and so forth, an interesting thing happened there one time. It happened to be a clear day and they could find us, but they were flying fairly low so they could hit their target. Because if they throw that out, it doesn't fall straight down, it falls like that [at an angle] because it's traveling pretty fast when it leaves the door. They have to guess where it's going to land. If they're pretty good at it, it lands inside our perimeter. If it's over here, the Japs eat it. So this plane's sailing over. He'd made a couple of rounds. They'd stack stuff up at the door and push it out, then they'd go around and while they were circling around, they'd stack a bunch more in the door, then they'd push it out. On about the third trip around, I heard this rifle shot. Now, the plane makes quite a bit of noise, but you could distinctly hear this one rifle shot. Almost immediately, that plane heeled over and it kind of went out of sight, but we could tell it crashed.

KI: Where was this?

Ray: That was on Leyte again, the same place they were dropping the rations to us. In Luzon, there was no problem getting supplied. We were never away for very long from a depot or anything. It was short time. On Luzon, we had all the supplies we wanted. All the ammunition, all the food, everything, and plenty of it. On Leyte, it wasn't like that at all.

But anyway, they sent a squad out to see if there were any survivors. Fortunately, there were a couple. The pilot, or co-pilot, was one and a couple of others that were back there pushing out supplies. There were two of them. I don't know how they survived, but they survived. They brought them back in.

KI: Now, you were going to tell me about being wounded.

Ray: Okay. Before I tell you that, one thing happened before I got wounded. We were stationed in this nice little place by the name of Santa Rosa. I can't remember names very good, but my particular medical section was housed in this real nice home. It was quite a nice community. It had a swimming pool and just lovely furniture and whatnot. The Japs had taken it over, but they'd been routed and so now it was our turn. We set up our headquarters in this house. There was something I'd never heard of or seen before. It was a bidet, in the bathroom. I thought, "What the dickens is that thing?" I got a little education at this place.

But we were there a few day in Santa Rosa with nothing much to do, so I went out around the town to see what the place looked like. I came across this big school ground where there was a high school. There was a lot of activity going on. I learned that in this building, just across from the high school grounds, was going on, I call it a kangaroo court. It was just a court of civilians there that was passing judgement on the people that had collaborated with the Japanese, traitors, so to speak.

I went in and sat down at that thing for a while. "Judges" were running them through quite fast. The ones that were found guilty, and there were quite a few of them, they'd take them out to this school grounds. Poles, oh, like short telephone poles, maybe up fifteen feet or something like that, were planted all over there. There were maybe a dozen or two of them. Even when I got there, there were people hanging from every which position, by the neck and by the

ankles, from all these posts. These people on this kangaroo court were finding them guilty, apparently for collaborating with the Japs. They'd sentence them to hang, and out they'd go.

KI: Were they hanging them until they died, or just for a period of time?

Ray: They all died. Most of them were dead when I saw them and they may have used a bullet or two if they were hanging too long, I don't know all those details. But while I was in this court, they'd put on trial a woman. Then were talking in Tagalog, so I couldn't understand a lot of what they were saying. Somebody around next to me could speak English, would clue me in once in a while. What they told me was that this woman was charged with giving information to the Japanese as to where a group of about a hundred men [were] that had been fighting guerilla tactics against the Japanese. They had a hideout somewhere and the Japs had never been able to flush them out. This woman had told the Japanese where they were for a few bucks or privileges or whatever, I don't know. But anyway, they didn't take long in finding her guilty. They sentenced here to be burned at the stake.

So I stayed around until they brought her out. They knew what they were going to sentence her, I guess, because they had this thing all ready. It was a post in the ground, just maybe six feet high and there were all kinds of kindling and trash boards and lumber and everything piled around there, some weeds. So they tied her up to that post and piled all that fuel around her and poured maybe gasoline or something on it and touched a match to it. Boy, it just went up in a hurry. I guess she might have been dead pretty quick. I hope.

Anyway, they had a couple of buglers standing on either side of that and they were playing "God Bless America." [Showing obvious emotion.] That's one of the products of war.

Now, we were talking about when I was wounded. Shortly after that we had an assignment to take a town called Santo Tomás. There was just a dirt road going through the forest and there was what I call a pit, more a gutter, on either side. So the road was built up a little bit. It was wide enough that two vehicles could pass without having to get clear off of the road, but it was a fairly narrow road. On either side, the trees are sparse for maybe fifty yards, then it got denser and denser as you got farther away on both sides.

We were marching towards this Santo Tomás. They had what they called a point out there to see if they can engage any enemy. They had their radios to wire back to tell us what's out there. So apparently, I don't know, they didn't see the Japs or the Japs knew where we were, or they may have already been zeroed in, had their mortars where they knew they'd fall and had somebody watch and when we got into this area, they started dropping these mortar shells all around.

I was walking on this road, about the center of the road, and beside me, almost, well, further out there than I could reach, was this jeep, going about as slow as he could go. There was just a jeep driver in the jeep. All of a sudden all these mortars started falling and exploding. One hit right between me and that jeep. It must have been coming down on a direction like that because the jeep was just thrown over and lit upside down in that gutter there, pieces of metal all over the place and the driver dead. But it picked up me in the air and threw me over. I lit in the other gutter, over on the opposite side. I still had my helmet on my head and I tried to climb into it, but I wouldn't fit.

But anyway, as I lay there trying to get covered up and curled up in as small a ball as I could, I had the sensation with that explosion that somebody had kicked me in the right leg. Not

too bad a kick, but a pretty solid kick. I didn't know what it was and I wasn't thinking much about whether I cared about it. But when all the explosions stopped and I began to survey the damage, why, my parachute boot, come about to here, and it was just running over with blood. It was filled up and running down my leg. But it didn't hurt. Here's wounded people all over the country there, and dead ones, and so I went about, and all my medical personnel with me, trying to take care of these.

You know, you do triage. If somebody looks like they're not going to make it, you don't waste any time on them. If somebody has a chance to survive, those are the ones you try to work with. We did the best we could to triage and get the salvageable ones taken care of. We had our radios and we started calling for ambulances. They weren't too far behind. It wasn't long before there was ambulances there carting them away. By night time we had pretty much everybody taken care of that needed to be transported. They were all gone except one. We made it through the night there. We didn't have a lot of wounded to take care of because they were gone to other camps.

The next morning, a little plane, which I call a Piper Cub, that might be something else entirely, anyway, a small plane, came. Another physician had been sent by Major Chambers. He was our regimental medical commander. He sent this other fellow to replace me because these fellows that had gone back, wounded, told him that I had been wounded in the leg. So he sent this replacement and they wanted to pick up this other fellow. Instead of sending an ambulance, they decided they'd take us both on this plane. It was equipped to put a stretcher from the front wheel, it come out like this, you know, and they had something that they put the stretcher on there and then anchored back onto something on the fuselage on each side. We put this one fellow on that stretcher there and tied him up.

KI: On the outside?

Ray: On the outside, and put me on the other one on the outside and flew us back in to Manila to what they called the New Bilibid prison. Now, this New Bilibid prison had been full before we got in there. Of course, they were most all political prisoners, so the Army turned loose every one of them and they turned the prison into a hospital. So that's where they took me. I was there for maybe two days, possibly three, I don't know.

They sent me then by hospital ship, called the SS Marigold, and it sailed back to New Guinea. That's where we started from. A long ways. It took us, I think, three days or four days to get there on a hospital ship, then to northern New Guinea to a place called Hollandia, because Holland had colonized this area and so they call it Little Holland or Hollandia. The Army had set up a general hospital at Hollandia. It was tents, but it covered a wide area that I imagine was like six or eight football fields set together. It was all these variable-sized tents. Some of them were big, long tents and some of them were just big enough for maybe six people. They had quite an operation going on there.

While I was there I got to see a road show, *Oklahoma*, that the States had sent over. They'd built a big stage. I guess over the long haul they had a lot of productions there on that stage. It was a massive stage.

KI: Just what you'd have liked to do: sing bass in *Oklahoma*, huh?

Ray: Yeah.

KI: I bet you'd rather have traded places with them than going back out to combat.

Ray: Well, there was something nice about that place. Of course, I had a nice bed and real nice food, and they had Coca Cola, but the catch there was that there was no ice a lot. It was just lukewarm Coca Cola and no fizz. They'd take ordinary Lister bag water and pour this Coca Cola extract into it and stir it up and that was the Coca Cola we had.

KI: What happened when you were hit with the shrapnel? Did it just go straight through your leg?

Ray: Well, there's not much to see, but this is the exit wound there. That's where it went in.

KI: So it just went straight through there.

Ray: It didn't catch any main arteries or anything, but what they did at New Bilibid was to debride, that's cut away the tissue that's hopeless, that's all shredded. They debrided that, then they put a drain, a strip of gauze packing from here out here, so that the natural drain process would take care of infection in there. If there was puss, it could drain out either side, follow that gauze.

In Hollandia, they further debrided that thing and put in a piece of drain in the right side and a piece of drain in the left side, but they didn't make it come together in the middle. So it would start healing there and they'd keep backing it out and pulling it back out until it healed from the inside out to the edge, then they sewed this up pretty neatly. It doesn't leave much of a scar there.

I don't remember now how long I was there. It might have been three weeks or longer. It seems to me it would have to be maybe a little longer than that until they put me back on the hospital ship. It was going back to Luzon, so I got on and went back to Luzon. When I got back there, my outfit was getting ready for another jump on northern Luzon which was at Aparri. It's as far as you can go north on Luzon.

One unit of the military was moving north towards a pocket of Japs here. They had us jump up here and we were supposed to kind of crunch them between the two of us. That was our mission there. Where we lit, there wasn't very much resistance at all. Then we started moving south to meet, I think it was the 7th Cavalry Division. They had big long guns, as long as from the front door back here. All kinds of tremendous cannons. The biggest weapon we ever had was an eighty-one millimeter mortar that they'd break down into parts and about three men could carry it. That was the heaviest equipment that a parachute battalion could take. They'd drop each one of those separate by parachute. When they got on the ground, they mortar team would have to assemble them back together. Or if you're on the move, each man would carry his own part.

KI: Were you there very long? It seems to me like it was getting toward the end of the war.

Ray: Pretty close. No, that was a pretty short-lived mission. I think it didn't take over a week. Then we were back. But by the time we got back, I can't remember how many days had elapsed,

it couldn't have been very long, then we got word, I'm not sure of the time line, we got word that the Russians had declared victory in Europe. It was V-E Day. They declared V-E Day in Europe. When that happened, the Russians thought, "Well, hey, that's over with. They're coming along pretty good with the Japanese, so we'll declare war on the Japanese." So they did.

Then we had all anticipated that we were just going to leap-frog along until we got into Japan and that there'd be all hell to pay when we got there because they just wouldn't give up. But we heard that Hiroshima had been atom bombed and that put a whole new picture on it. Truman told them, "Now, look here. Hundreds of thousands of people died in a second and we've got more bombs. So we advise you to sign an armistice, pronto." They didn't even answer.

President Truman threatened them several times: settle to your own advantage. But they wouldn't accept. So not too many days after Hiroshima, they dropped another A-bomb on Nagasaki and it wasn't so bad, but I think there was still 85,000, as I remember. Then lots of them died for years after as a result of radiation.

KI: As a doctor, how do you feel about the United States having had to resort to nuclear warfare?

Ray: I was all for it because the Japanese were willing to let that war go on into Japan and fight until the last man fell. They were ready and willing to fight to the last man. Now, the Japanese people, I found out when I got to Japan, weren't warmongers, weren't war hungry, they were generally nice, congenial people just like you and I. They'd curtsy and bow and offer you a cup of tea and all that stuff. They were ready and willing to do anything they could for you. They were just not what you'd expect. They weren't that way.

But Tojo and [the other] leaders... We'd have had quite a loss ourselves. My feeling and thinking then was, if it took a hundred more Japanese for every United States civilian that was saved, why, I was for it because they started it and look at the damage they created there in Pearl Harbor. They didn't have any qualms about killing thousands of people. So I had no qualms about it. I was all for it.

KI: You got into Japan after the bombs?

Ray: Yes. We got word that we'd be going early. Within a few days after Nagasaki, we thought we'd be going to Japan because they had said, "Okay, we quit," after they dropped that second A-bomb one, "We quit." So I don't know what goes on in the upper echelons, but apparently MacArthur was making arrangements on the Battleship Missouri to get together and sign this armistice. We were told that we were going to fly in and jump on Japan and that the parachute regiment would be the honor guard for MacArthur.

So we loaded up planes on Manila and went to Okinawa. We thought we'd go right away and drop in Japan, but we sat there on the tarmac of the airport several days waiting. We wondered what the dickens was going on here. Finally, we got the word to go. So at 1:30 in the morning of August thirty-first we loaded on the planes and headed for Japan. We were told we were going to jump on Atsugi Airport, which is right close to Tokyo and Yokohama.

We had the understanding that the airstrip there had been blown and bombed beyond use, so we thought we were going to fly over the airport and drop on that position.

KI: Just parachute out?

Ray: Yes, parachute, and we were all wearing our parachutes. From Okinawa to Japan we had our parachutes on, ready to go. But when we started approaching the airport, the pilot established communication with the tower there. They speak English and so they were communicating back and forth. The guy at the tower invited them to land on the airstrip. He said, "Our airstrip's in perfect condition. There's nothing wrong with it. No need of you jumping unless you want to."

Of course, all the men wanted to, wanted to go home and talk about jumping into Japan. But they said, "Okay, we've got the word from our commander to stay in your seat. Take off your parachutes and we're going to land on the strip." So that's what we did.

KI: You spent some time in Japan, didn't you?

Ray: Yeah. I left Japan in the latter part of November.

KI: Do you have some things to tell me about that time?

Ray: Well, there's a few interesting things about Japan.

[Interview continues on May 11, 2004.]

KI: This is the second interview with Ray Spendlove. He's going to start out by explaining his experiences when he got to Japan after the two bombs had been dropped.

Ray: Did we mention that I had amoebic dysentery?

KI: Yes.

Ray: Prior to that time I had encounter an enteric infestation with an organism called ascaris lumbracoides. What it is in simple words, it's a long roundworm. They are kind of an off-white animal and they get as big around as your finger, and maybe fourteen, sixteen, maybe even twenty inches long. I hadn't been feeling exceptionally ill, but one morning I awakened in my pup tent feeling nauseated and went outside and upchucked. I looked at the vomitus and there was this long white snake, I thought it was strange that I hadn't noticed it before. I thought it was something that had to be on the ground when I upchucked.

Very shortly I had another wave of nausea and upchucked again, and behold, there's now two of these things, crawling in the grass. I took methylene blue as a treatment. I didn't have it with me at the time, but it was readily available, because this is not an uncommon thing there, but I got the medication and apparently cured myself of it because I never had any further indications that I had more. This ascaris is transmitted by eating food that's been contaminated, generally by human excrement because these roundworms pass these ova, eggs, by the millions, I guess. Maybe that's a high estimate, but anyway, in quite large numbers. So it's easy to contaminate food, particularly uncooked food like salads. Lettuce and cabbage and things like that are particularly bad because they don't get cooked. The people there generally have contaminated hands. If they don't wear sterile gloves or something, their hands are mostly contaminated with these almost microscopic eggs.

KI: This was in the Philippines, not in Japan?

Ray: Yes, this is still in the Philippines. Amoebic dysentery was in Japan, so we're backtracking. Anyway, I didn't have any long-lasting effects from it.

KI: Did you have to treat a lot of men with it?

Ray: Yeah, there were quite a few of them. More of them had other parasites, cutaneous and so forth. We had every kind of thing you can imagine. Everything we didn't know what it was we called 'jungle rot.' Jungle rot often was a combination of two, three, four, five, six things at one time, yeast, fungi, allergies, and bacteria and every other kind of thing combined. Whatever it was, it was given the name jungle rot.

We didn't have a lot of things that helped that very good then, the cortisones and antibiotics and some of the dyes weren't available then. But with just good hygiene and fresh air and clean clothes, most of the men, over a period of time, could heal it up by themselves. It came about from moisture, wet clothes, and poor hygiene. In Leyte, for instance, the mission that I've talked about, I came out of there a month later with the same pants, same socks, same shirt, same shoes that I walked in there with. You can imagine what kind of sanitation that is.

KI: Sure, and wet a lot of the time and humid.

Ray: Wet almost all the time. At night, even sleeping in the stream because the mud was so yucky. You couldn't stand to sleep in a puddle of mud, so you'd go out in the stream a ways where it wasn't too deep, find a rock to put your head on and sleep in the stream. It was a lot better than sleeping in the muck.

The troops would walk around there and it would get so soggy, if you stepped in the mud, you couldn't pull your foot out. And that's not good to sleep in. That's actually how we spent several nights, "sleeping" in the stream bed. So, the skin took an awful beating. It doesn't like to be wet that long.

KI: Let's skip back to Japan.

Ray: Okay. It seems to me we mentioned landing of Atsugi Airstrip. The personnel in the tower told us to come and land, that the airstrip was in good condition. So instead of being able to jump, which 'most all the fellows wanted to do, we had to just take off our parachutes and climb down out of the plane. That was it.

The Japanese people that were there just received us very cordially and wanted to do what they could for you. As soon as we got to where we could be on speaking terms with them, instead of a conqueror and conquered relationship, they'd invite us into their homes and offer us tea or, if the troops wanted, they'd give them sake. I never did taste sake, so I don't know what it tastes like, but it's a courtesy gesture for the Japanese to offer sake when you come. Then, like you've been told, the courteous thing to do is take your shoes off at the door entry and go in. The floors are generally woven of some kind of a grass and bamboo and things like that. You sit with crossed knees and a little, very low table.

KI: How did you meet regular civilians? Were they coming to see you as a doctor?

Ray: No, I never did treat any of them, but I guess the higher echelons set up medical facilities that would take care of ill Japanese. But they had some of their own physicians working and, of course, then they were free to go and take care of their medical practices. During the war, most of them, I guess, had been sent off to war. At home they were maybe getting by, I'm not sure what the situation was, but probably with lower echelon medical personnel, nurses, medical aides of some kind, I would suppose, because it was kind of short on medical care at home, even here in Vernal. Dr. John Clark, he went into the service with Drs. Eskelson and Hansen. Francke was here, but he was just seeing a few of his old cronies, he was pretty far along in age.

So anyway, we'd encounter them on the streets or anywhere, you know, and sometimes we'd have occasion to deal with them. They'd come for some kind of permits to do this or do that. Whenever we encountered them, or wherever, they were really sociable and invited you to their homes and offered you sake or whatever they may have.

I don't know if I mentioned, we visited Tokyo, as kind of a tourist approach. We had some days off where we could do what we wanted and we just rode around. Tokyo was really an experience from the vantage point that I saw it. I don't know if there were other parts that were much different, but from where I was, you could look out for miles and miles in every direction and there wasn't anything that stood above the ground, more than a few inches, rarely a foot or so. Apparently, most of the homes there were made out of wood, very light wood, and paper. They had paper sliding doors and grass mats and floors that were woven. So at the touch of a match they'd just go up. But with the incendiary bombs there, Tokyo had just burned to the ground. It looked like a charcoal desert.

There were no factories there. There were a lot of things going on in the homes they told me, small cottage industry. A family would be assigned to make something like bullet casings or something that they had the tools for in their home and they would do it. But the home itself was just a powder keg; the touch of a match and it would be gone. So that's the view of Tokyo that I got.

Now, somewhere in all this is the emperor's palace of Emperor Hirohito. For political purposes, MacArthur, in great wisdom, definitely didn't want to damage that palace. In political dealings with the Japanese, I think he was a genius. He wanted to leave Hirohito as their emperor and let them keep their worship. They considered him a god. But yet, he had to agree to take orders from General MacArthur's office. So let MacArthur tell him what he wanted done, then Hirohito would tell his people what to do, and they were happy to do it.

It was a lot different than in Iraq, you know. Just the exact opposite. The leaders that are still there are telling the people not to do anything they [the Americans] want you to do or we'll kill you. But in Japan, those people did what they were told and they were delighted to do it. They had none of Iraq's kind of trouble.

KI: What was your mission in Japan?

Ray: My mission was just as a medical officer to the men in my battalion.

KI: Why were they there?

Ray: As an occupation force. Actually, we were just an interim occupation force. I can't tell you a thing about other occupation forces. I know they were all over Japan, or I think they were, different infantry groups and artillery groups and parachute troops, every kind of military establishment you could think of were sent here and there as occupation troops, they were the ones. It wasn't hard at all; I wasn't there very long and I didn't have any of that responsibility. My responsibility was to take care of the men in my battalion as far as medical problems. So I didn't have any association with them except off the cuff.

When maybe they'd come in our area to get some kind of direction or something, we'd take care of some of their ill. If they got ill, we'd do what we could for them because their medical care was kind of sparse. My contact with them wasn't really as much as a lot of the other people's was.

KI: Did you ever see any prisoners of war?

Ray: Well, we had a few of our own when we were in combat, particularly in Leyte. But in Japan we had all these means of evacuation. If we took a prisoner, we could send them away real quick.

KI: Did you ever see any American prisoners who were released by the Japanese?

Ray: Oh, no. You see, I've told you about this long time we spent on Okinawa. Now I don't know what was going on between the time they said, "Okay, we're calling a halt," and we landed on Atsugi Airstrip, but I'm sure there was a lot going on behind the scenes. Maybe trucking those wounded to ships and getting them to hospital ships, or on their way home, or flying them out of Japan, flying them home for care. When I got there I never saw any of those people, they'd probably all gone.

KI: Okay. So, how long were you there? Is that when you got dysentery?

Ray: I had the amoebic dysentery in Japan. Now, I don't know where I got it. I undoubtedly got it before because generally it's a while before you start having that kind of symptoms and I wasn't there that long. So, I probably got it on Luzon, maybe even as far back as Leyte, because I was only in Japan, I guess, maybe not over two weeks, but I got that amoebic dysentery. It might have been a little less than two weeks when I got the symptoms of it. But it could have been brewing in me for a long, long time.

KI: Is that why you ended up coming home?

Ray: No. We ended up coming home because there was such little need for all those numbers of people there in the occupation forces. It was costing the government money to keep them there and they didn't need them. So they were sending them home pretty fast. I wasn't there very long. I wrote some dates down. The day we left Japan, it had to be in November, we got home the day before Thanksgiving, to Seattle. We were on a slow ship. It didn't have much cargo on it. There was nothing but troops, so it was way up out of the water. It was bouncy and rolling and all that kind of thing.

KI: By that time you were sick anyway, weren't you?

Ray: No, I was feeling better from dysentery by then. They kept me just a few days in the hospital, but once I got on medication, all my symptoms started abating and I felt pretty good then. I was feeling real good when I came home, except when I got on that ship. Then I felt like I had amoebic dysentery again! But, no, I was feeling quite well by that time.

KI: Do you remember how long it took you to sail from Japan to Seattle?

Ray: Well, I know it took us about twenty-two days to get from 'Frisco to New Guinea, but we were going zig-zag all the way. It took us about half that time; it could have been ten days, ten, twelve, somewhere around ten. I've got those dates in my journal. I could look that up.

KI: Once you got to Seattle, did you separate from the service there?

Ray: No, I got separated at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City. They kept us in Seattle for three or four days. I don't know why. You know, if the train was loaded up, you couldn't get scheduled until the train was empty. So you went places when you got the opportunity to get on board a train or a plane, or a ship. A lot of times you'd just sit and wait for something to happen. I think that's what happened there mainly. They maybe wanted us to get our sea legs again or something. I don't know what all.

KI: When you were in Seattle, did you get to call your wife and family?

Ray: Yes. I don't know whether we called or telegraphed. We did an awful lot of telegraphing in those days. Anyway, she and my mother and father and her mother and father and a few of our relatives were at the station in Salt Lake. It's thirty miles from there out to Bingham, so we just got in our car and went home.

That was the homecoming celebration, but that's the way for World War II for the Asia/Pacific theater soldiers. There were no big parades. We came home piecemeal. I can't tell you what on. I know on V-E Day in New York, for instance, they had all these parades and ticker tapes and things and they probably did with Japan. But it was kind of an anticlimax the way it came in Japan, you know. Finally, after the atom bomb and all that, there wasn't much made of our homecomings or anything like that.

Nobody knew I came except my family. I don't know how many other fellows there were. There were probably a lot of other soldiers on that train, but each of them had a family there, but that was it.

KI: I'll bet it was good to see them again.

Ray: Oh, you bet it was! You've made heard the song "It's been a long, long time; kiss me once, kiss me twice, kiss me once again. It's been a long, long time." That was awfully popular in those days, even with me!

KI: Because you could sing the bass part, huh?

Ray: Yeah. I could sing any part. I'd put it down in my key and sing it down here, you know.

KI: Was this the first time you saw your baby?

Ray: Yes, first time, and she was eighteen months.

KI: What was her name?

Ray: Leslie Rae. That's not the name I picked before I went over.

KI: But you weren't here to stick up for it.

Ray: We'd kind of settled on Beverly until I got the notice. I got a telegram. She was born on 19 of July and I received a telegram the last day of July. I think I told you it had gone through Australia and up through New Guinea and finally got to me then. So 19 July 1944, and she was eighteen months old when I saw her.

KI: Did it take you very long to bond to her?

Ray: It took her a little while to bond to me. Her mother kept a picture of me for her to chew on and play with. So she knew me very well. She kind of reluctantly came to me, but she didn't want me to get in Mama's bed with her. So I had a real problem for quite a while. She'd get in her own bed and she'd stay there and this was now Daddy's place there. That was kind of hard.

KI: I'd imagine it was. Even the guys who came back last week [National Guard troops from Vernal who had been serving in Iraq], I know one of them and his baby was very young when he left and she's almost two years old. I wonder what it was like.

Ray: I guess you run into all kinds of situations. They'd done a lot of talking with the picture, you know: this is your daddy and he's coming home pretty soon.

KI: But she was a very young child to try to understand that. So you came home, then how long was it before you came out here, since you were still wearing your uniform when you got here.

Ray: I came here the first of February in the next year, which would be '46. I came home in '45, right before Christmas. Well, I'd spent Thanksgiving Day up in Seattle, then just maybe three days or something like that. Just a few days before we left. So it was fairly early in December when I got here. So, I spent Christmas there.

I told you about my career difficulties. I still had the idea of going into obstetrics and gynecology. I'd already sent out a lot of applications and had word back from quite a few of them that they were backlogged for a couple of years. So there were a few more places I sent them to. Did I tell you about Dr. Frazier?

KI: You did.

Ray: He knew about the throes of turmoil Vernal was in at that time and he said, "You'll be so welcome out there, you can't believe it." And that was the truth. Dr. Eskelson just all but begged me to go in the examining room there and start seeing patients immediately. They were in his waiting room just standing up, all the seats were occupied.

KI: How long do you think it took you to drive out here from Bingham the first time you came?

Ray: I don't know for sure, but it seemed like it was unearthly. I thought Dr. Frazier had given me directions to the Antarctic! But I think it must have been six hours. I think it was, from Bingham. Bingham is only thirty miles beyond Salt Lake. But all those turning, twisting roads. I think I had my father-in-law's car.

KI: Were you alone?

Ray: Alone, yes.

KI: Your wife didn't come?

Ray: No, she didn't come then. When Dr. Eskelson told me he wanted me right away, I told him, "I've got to get my wife and I've got to get some clothes." I said, "I think we'll be back, for sure. I think I can promise you that. But she has the final veto."

Actually, when I described Vernal to her and what it was like, she was real reluctant to go. I thought, "What am I going to do? I can probably go join some doctor somewhere, but I won't be independent at all. I'll be doing what somebody else wants." She said, "Well, for two years I think I can stand it." But when she saw it, it didn't change her opinion too much. She got to know a few people at church and they were friendly and all. So she gradually came around. But, no, she wasn't too enthused early on.

KI: Where did you first live when you got here? Housing was pretty tight then, wasn't it?

Ray: Oh, yeah. The experience we'd had, before, down in the South, you know, there were rent controls and all of that thing on. The government, I don't know how they'd come to a decision, but they'd go from place to place and: You can't charge any more than this much for this house or for this apartment or whatever. And that's the way it was, except the renter, and we ran into that here, said, the rent, I don't know what it was, but let's say \$60 a month. But he said, "The rent is \$60, but I'm not going to give you this place for \$60, so you're going to have to write me a check for \$60, but you're going to have to give me forty bucks under the table." I thought, "Well, what did we go to war for?" We'd run into that all over the country before we went overseas. We found that same thing when we got here.

The place we lived for a while was upstairs, just down Vernal Avenue. What was the name of the little hotel there? There was the Cobble Rock, then the very next building.

KI: Oh, up where the National Guard Armory was. It's just right next to the Cobble Rock station

and N.J. Meagher had built some little apartments. Is that the place? [Approximately 25 South Vernal Avenue.]

Ray: Second story, at the very back of that building, on the Main Street side, and that's where it was, in that building.

KI: They were really small, weren't they, dark?

Ray: Oh, yeah, real small. Of course, we knew that was going to be as short a time there as we could make it. A little home on the corner of Third West and First South became available, so we moved there. We were in Second [LDS] Ward over there, where that hospital took over. So we lived there a short time, less than a year, I'm sure it was. Then we bought a little place that became available. It was kind of a run-down place that wasn't much to start with. But it was 529 West on 100 South. It's the second building west from the 500 West corner. A family by the name of Darrell and Erma Johnstun built a home right there on the corner and we bought a small place right next to it, west.

We started adding on to it. Finally, we tore off all we'd added on and built a new living room and a new kitchen and stairs to go upstairs. We added a second story and we had two bedrooms up there and a bathroom. We added a shower/bathroom to one of the bedrooms that was downstairs and built on a garage.

KI: Is that house still there?

Ray: It's still there. Do you know Arvin Nelson? He lives there. There's a brick structure, then the very next one, on First South. Do you remember the Corner Store?

KI: I've heard about it. It was where the parking lot for the [Glines LDS] stake center is.

Ray: Yeah, right. Johnstun was just catty-corner from where the Corner Store used to be. Then we were next to them. If you drive by there, it's a white wood structure. We lived there for eight years. What happened was, we were very good friends with Paul and Isobel Batty. They lived on First South about 300 West, something like that. So they bought this property right across the stream and built that home there. They lived here two or three years and talked us into buying on this side of the stream and coming down here and building.

KI: Which stream?

Ray: There's a stream right between these two houses. They talked us into building here [733 South 500 West]. We moved in here in 1956. I could show you a picture. It's when I first started. It was actually a grain field and the grain was tall. We dug into it and the water table was high so they had to drill way down there to find a foundation formation. This house was built on concrete piers. They dug a huge hole, kind of on a square, ten feet deep, poured concrete, then they did another one, another one, another one. They put beams between these things and built the house on them. But this ground isn't that moist anymore. A governmental agency put in those drain fields. There's one up here, west, and one down here, south, so the ground is kind of dry now.

The architect had required that we do a test. They just drilled a shallow hole until they came to water, then they call that the water table. Then, depending on what the rules are, you have to build according to where the water table is. Well, at the time they dug that it wasn't very high for some reason. It might have been a dry season, but when they got around to digging those holes for the house, the water just come in like mad. We put a pump on here and it was pumping sixty gallons a minutes to just keep the water level. We had pipes all over here sucking the water out. It would come out of a pipe that big, just shoot out. So we had a water well here to begin with.

KI: When were your other children born?

Ray: Leslie, the one born while I was overseas, was born 19 July 1944. All those dates are on that [biographical sheet] that I typed out. Then Kim came along in 1947, 28th of August, here in Vernal. Brian came along 18 May 1949. Valynne, she got her name because she was born on Valentine's Day, February 14, 1953.

KI: All the other children were born here?

Ray: Yes, all here except Leslie. The next two were born in the old hospital. You know where that is?

KI: Yes, I do. Will you tell me about it, though? And when you started practicing with Dr. Eskelson, did you share the same office or did you set up another office?

Ray: He had two or three offices there equipped with examining tables and so forth, so he said, "Take this office, it's yours." Of course, I had a few things, blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes, and otoscopes, not much stuff, but he was well equipped there in these examining rooms. I didn't have any great investment to make.

KI: And where was this located?

Ray: I think the address was about 60 West Main. It was just three-quarters of a block from Vernal Avenue. We weren't quite to the post office at 100 West, only on the opposite side.

KI: It was just the hospital that was down past the post office [about 226 West Main]?

Ray: The hospital was on the north side of Main street.

KI: And that's where Eskelson's house was, right? Next to that hospital?

Ray: Yeah, his house was there. He built a little covered ramp from his bedroom into the hospital so he could go over in his pajamas. He got a call and he just got out of bed and he was there. That was nice.

KI: I thought he had his offices in his home, but he didn't?

Ray: No. He may have some time or other, but when I came, his office was there [on Main Street] between Vernal Avenue and First West. It was getting pretty close to the corner where that drug store, Rexall, it was Rexall once, but even before that, I can't remember.

KI: It wasn't Vernal Drug?

Ray: No, Vernal Drug was on the other side and up a block [13 East Main]. Stan King had a sports shop there and we were, I think, next to that. It could have been 75 West. The other office, I know that was 62 East Main. That was a year or more after Dr. Seager joined Dr. Eskelson and me. I don't know whether I talked about him or not.

KI: You told me he was also out at Bingham, and came here from there. Tell me what your first day of practice was like, were you completely inundated with patients?

Ray: Yeah, with everything. There were no two days alike. Right away, you know about the baby boom. Already there were people coming home from the war, long before I did. The war wasn't over that long, but it was winding down, so there had been people coming home. The ones that had come home, even early, were married a lot of them, family people who already had children and now they were having more. I started seeing a lot of obstetric cases.

But there were a lot of injuries from the oil field. Of course, we had to go to the hospital to treat them, generally. If it was anything serious, take care of them in the hospital, admit them as hospital patients. But there was just about anything you can think of, tonsillitis, ear ache, sore throat, pneumonia, flu and diarrhea, just the run of the mill stuff.

KI: You told me the other day about tumors that people hadn't had removed.

Ray: These would be old people mainly, not youngsters, but 40-, 50-, 60-, 70-, 80-year-old people that had things that were just neglected because of difficulty of getting care, I guess, and the remoteness here. One of them was what we call a teratoma.

A teratoma is kind of a complex thing to understand, but it's what the ovary sometimes does in desperation to produce a baby when nobody's willing to provide the sperm. It sits there and waits and waits and nobody's doing anything. The eggs are supposed to split off every month, but something strange, nobody really know yet why, that egg starts acting like it's been fertilized. It starts to grow, but it doesn't have all the components necessary. So it does what it can, which isn't too much, but it produces hair and skin, and it produces fingernails and teeth and sebaceous material, that's the stuff that secretes out of your skin pores. It produces more of that than anything else.

This one particular woman had one of these, a teratoma, that had developed and gotten bigger than a normal pregnancy, more like twins or triplets. It was just this tumor from an ovary. When we operated on her, we had a big pan that I think had been used by photographers to develop pictures in, these big pictures. We opened her up and opened the tumor and started scooping out this sebaceous material, which is kind of on the order of yogurt maybe, about that kind of thickness. We heaped up that pan full, then we got down to where it was fingernails and teeth and skin and hair. The hair would be straight as an arrow, in bundles. It was a strange thing

to behold. I only saw maybe two or three of those in my whole forty-one years I practiced here. But there was that one, almost waiting for us, waiting for us to come home.

There was a gentleman that had a lycoma, which is a just plain fat tumor. It was on his neck. For some reason or another he was reluctant to do anything about it. When that was removed, I think it was thirteen pounds. It was just a fat lump.

I don't know whether you've ever heard of a hydrocele. Hydrocele is where the scrotum fills up full of water. There was a fellow came in with a hydrocele that had, I can't remember the exact volume, but right offhand, I'd guess at least a gallon of water in that hydrocele. He had to have a special harness to carry that around in.

Another thing, we had more than one, two or three of them, is a fibroid tumor of the uterus. Fibroid tumors grow like little potatoes. They can grow in the middle of the muscular wall, they can grow on the outside of the uterus, or they can grow inside the cavity of the uterus. But most of them are discovered even before a patient can feel it. You know, if a doctor gives her a pelvic exam, you can feel this and tell when you've got a tumor there. But this one had grown huge, up to eight or ten pounds. It was fibroid tumor.

Begin Tape 366

Ray: Another condition we ran into was unusual hernias. A lot of people will go around, even today, with hernias that aren't repaired. But some of them are horrible, you can't imagine. A hernia is a weakness in the abdominal wall that lets the contents of the abdomen squeeze out through the abdominal wall. It can't get out through the skin so it just swells from there on. It can cause obstruction of the intestine and even death if it isn't taken care of. But we ran into several people that had not only the hernia, but it had developed and gotten bigger and bigger and bigger until there was about as much intestine out of the belly, under the skin, as there was in the belly.

Some of them had found that if they lay on their back, particularly if they got their head low and their feet elevated and use a little gentle pressure and knead that thing, they can get it back through the hole into the abdomen where it belongs. Then if they wear a hernia belt over that hole, they could get enough pressure to keep everything inside instead of it coming through. But I doubt if anybody today ever sees a hernia that gets more than just fist size, you know.

But there was one elderly woman, who lived on Main Street, up here by the dinosaur, that had an umbilical hernia. It herniated through the umbilicus. She was very obese to begin with, but she had this huge hernia hanging out there and she just couldn't get around the house hardly, just from one chair to the other. It got to the point where she couldn't get it back in at all. So she carried this mass of intestine, most of the intestine that wasn't attached to her back—the large bowel, the colon is attached, it comes up here, and across and down—it can't hernia very much. But all the small bowels, loose, they can move around in there, and it was practically all out in this hernia. Now, we never did operate on her because she was too old and she'd been living with it for a long time. I don't think she was anxious and we weren't anxious to do it either because it was kind of a bad situation.

That was the worst one, but there were a lot of lesser ones, hernias, sometimes hernias on both sides.

KI: Tell me what the hospital was like, and what it was like to do surgery. Did you have it better in the service than you did here?

Ray: Oh, this was a heavens compared to the service. Oh, my, my, yes. I told you about lying in the mud, on my belly, under a poncho, in the rain, with somebody holding a little flashlight, it was only about that long and they had probably two D batteries in them. You couldn't get very far away under the circumstances. You were working in a black spot most of the time. They'd get sick, so the light was going everywhere except where you wanted it, oh! Nothing could be like that.

KI: Oh, no. But this was a pretty primitive little hospital over here in the Episcopal parish house, wasn't it?

Ray: Yes, it was. One of the most unusual things was the nursery. This nursery used to be, I'm sure, a closet, because it was no more, I'm sure, than five feet wide, maybe less. The hospital people had built shelves running along each side of this closet clear from the floor, clear up to the ceiling. It wasn't very deep. It wasn't over about eight or nine feet deep, so it was a real small little closet with all these shelves. The reason they needed that many was because they were keeping women after delivery for ten days.

Of course, when the doctors started coming home from the military, they started telling everybody the ones that were wounded, they didn't have much obstetrics to deal with, but of the wounds, they found out that the ones that did the best were the ones that got up and ambulated the fastest. So they started cutting that to eight days, seven days, six days, five days. Now, some of them deliver and go home. In fact, my wife delivered our son, Kim, in '47, and I delivered another woman who was in the room. The next morning I come and told her to get her things organized and I'd pick her up at noon and we'd bring her home. The woman in the bed next to her says something about, "Who is that little whippersnapper? You get yourself a new doctor. Don't do what he tells you!"

Anyway, we kind of got that movement going, and pretty soon, that's the way it was going. We kept them two or three days. But now I don't know what the average would be, but it's real short.

KI: Who managed the hospital?

Ray: Alvin Weeks was the manager at that time, but shortly after that it was Erland Preece. He was there for a number of years. Among other things, he eventually became, when they moved into the new hospital that the Junior Chamber of Commerce built, not only the manager, but he also took the x-rays, developed the x-ray pictures. I don't know, there's several other things that he did, too.

KI: How long were you here before Dr. Seager came?

Ray: He came in July and I was in February. As I told you, I had known him, my wife had known him and Dorothy quite well, they had been friendly in Bingham, visited in each other's homes.

KI: Before he came, how did you manage surgery?

Ray: Dr. Hansen would help us with our surgery and one of us would help him when he had surgery. Some surgeries a doctor and a nurse can do it alone if they use a spinal anesthesia and they have a good nurse to monitor the patient while they do the surgery. That happened a lot of times. But we tried to have one of us doctors at the head of the table watching the patient during the surgery, then a doctor and an assistant would do the surgery. The room that was designated as a surgery had been the kitchen [in the Episcopal parish house/hospital].

To sterilize the instruments, they didn't have a regular autoclave like all hospitals have, but they had one of these super-duper boiler things like you cook a pig in or something. It was a huge thing that you seal down the seals around it and it has a pressure gauge on it so it won't let it build up enough pressure to blow up. They'd set that on a stove and heat it. They had a scale that would tell them how long at that steam pressure they'd have to cook it before it would be sterile. There was a kind of a scale to go by on how many wraps of linen it had around it because it would take longer for that steam to penetrate in, you know, through several layers. Some of the big instruments had to be wrapped up to be secure. So to determine how long that had to be in that steamer depended on the size. Big, heavy stuff took longer to get up to heat and if it was wrapped up with several layers, that would take longer. They'd check the schedule and cook it that long, take the lid off and, with sterile gloves on their hands and sterile instruments, they'd fish the stuff out and put it on sterile trays, go in the operating room and start to work.

KI: Was that actually in the hospital kitchen?

Ray: They had to have a different kitchen for the menu. I don't remember much about that kitchen to tell you the truth.

KI: I was wondering if it was the same place they sterilized the instruments or if they did that in a different place.

Ray: I would need to research that, but that's the way I remember it.

KI: Okay. Then they had that really, really steep ramp.

Ray: Yes. The surgery was definitely downstairs and there were beds downstairs, but I think there were more beds upstairs. I'm sure there were. If you had a pretty heavy person to get up there, it would take a real crew to push them up. You had to strap them on real secure and have some up in front pulling and on the sides pulling and up behind pushing to get them up that ramp; it was easily that steep.

One unusual story about that ramp. During the rodeo one time, one of the participants in the rodeo had been ill. He wouldn't quit; he wanted to win some money. He was hurting, had a real bad belly ache. He was hurting real bad so he tried to get himself pretty well drunk, which he did. But it got so bad, somebody brought him into the hospital, late at night. The rodeo went to about midnight and he came over about 9:30 or 10, something like that. He had acute appendicitis. So we operated on him and put him to bed. Of course, they didn't have as many people there to watch the patients as they should have.

Later on, during the night, he awakened and got out of bed and was wandering around up there. The ramp came up like this and around, then back here to get into the different rooms.

There was a railing to keep you from falling off onto the ramp. It was about four feet high. Anyway, he got to wandering out there in that ramp area and fell over that railing onto the ramp and rolled clear to the bottom. We got called on that. I thought sure he'd be split wide open and all his intestines hanging out, but he wasn't. He seemed to be hanging together okay so we had to get him back up there in bed again and secure him with ankle and wrist bands. Tie him down. He finally got sober enough that he wouldn't try it again.

KI: Can you remember who some of the nurses were when you first started?

Ray: Beth Sweatfield I remember. Constance B. Thorne was the head nurse. Anything you find on the old hospital will mention her. She was some relation to Leo Thorne. Beth Sweatfield, I think she was there at the time. Sam Hatch's wife [Lucille], she came, but I think that was later probably. Whether she was there then, I'm not sure. There was one or two nurses I've never been able to remember their names. I could research that a little myself and get back to you.

KI: How long were you in that old church hospital?

Ray: It wasn't long. The Junior Chamber of Commerce started talking up the idea of the new hospital. We owe a lot of gratitude to them for doing that. They conceived the idea of putting in these slot machines all around town and people liked a little outlet to gamble a little bit, five cents or a quarter at a time.

KI: Although, Ken Sowards told me that the one that really made the most money was the dollar machine.

Ray: The dollar one, huh? I don't know as I ever saw a dollar one. As a matter of fact, after they quit using them, they stored them in a room in the hospital, down there in the basement. It wasn't even a concrete floor under it. They all got rusted and out of shape. But Chuck Henderson, among them, salvaged some of those and some parts from different ones. They made several good ones, you know, and put them around at service stations and whatnot.

But I guess it was legal to use them for they dispensed dinosaur tokens instead of money. You'd put in a dollar maybe and get an aluminum dinosaur token. Each one had a different design, stegosaurus and so forth on them. They were popular with tourists, but the hospital had long since been then, and I don't know who all was in on that deal, if there were others besides Chuck Henderson or not, but they were around for quite a while.

KI: Are those also the people who would have served on the hospital board? Who decided to build the hospital? Was it just the Jaycees or was there another community group?

Ray: I think the new hospital promotion just had its genesis right there in the Junior Chamber of Commerce. Of course, the county owned and operated the hospital that was in existence, so they worked with them, got their approval. I don't know how they meshed their resources together, but the whole idea originated, it's my understanding, with the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

KI: How did you feel about getting into that new hospital? Do you remember what year it was?

Ray: The thing I remember about it, I wanted my son, Brian, to be born there. So the opening date was scheduled to be about the early part of May. We thought, "He's due about the middle of May, so maybe we can get it opened in time to get him delivered there." But he wasn't in a hurry to come along. He procrastinated and procrastinated. He was born on the eighteenth of May and I think a day or two or three after that the hospital opened.

KI: What year was that?

Ray: In '49.

KI: So you actually were out here with that other hospital for about three years.

Ray: Yeah. From February '46 until May of '49.

KI: And he was born in the old one?

Ray: Yeah. Kim, my other son, was born in the old one, but, of course, he missed it by a mile. He was born in '47.

KI: But Valynne made it to the new hospital.

Ray: She made it. She came along in '53 so the hospital was about three or four years old. She came along on Valentines Day. I had an idea we were going to name her Valynne. There was some talk. They all wanted to have a say-so over there about what we named her. I said, "Okay, we'll have a ballot and each of you will get a vote." So I had all kinds of names suggested, Bubbles, yeah, that was Dr. Fowler, if you've heard of him.

He and his wife, Jane, both practiced here for a while. I don't know what the reason was for his parachute training, but anyway, he had done some parachuting and somebody down in the southern part of the state was stranded off in no-man's land and injured. So he volunteered to go and parachute jump in with some medical supplies, which he did. But he and his wife practiced here for just a few years. Then they left. He died quite shortly after and she died not too long after. But they were both young.

KI: Do you remember other doctors that were here during your time?

Ray: Yeah, Dr. Young came. My wife wrote a whole history on the doctors from the first one, which was Harvey Coe Hullinger, up until after I'd retired, so I can get all those names.

KI: Thank you, I have their names, but I wanted to know which ones you remembered.

Ray: This Young, I worked with him quite a while. Of course, Hansen was already here. I won't mentioned his name, but we had one that died of an overdose of narcotics. We had several that would come just for a short time, some of them make a lot of bustle and hustle and pomp, but didn't have what it took. I don't know what their background was. They had trouble in getting

along and they weren't competent, so they didn't last long.

KI: Let's change the subject a little. What did you like to do for fun?

Ray: I was in the Lions Club and they were always putting on either variety shows or minstrels or something like that. For one time I was called a tail-twister, and a tail-twister, his purpose was to make fun, do something at each meeting so there'd be a little bit of fun. So I had a little bit of fun writing words to songs about different members, as a club. I'd always try to have some little thing, just take a few minutes each time, as just a fun thing.

But these minstrel shows, I generally got the assignment of coming up with some kind of minstrel. I'd get out joke books and try to find all the jokes that might be appropriate for a minstrel in a Lions Club. Just write a sequence for the jokes and assign to different members to be certain characters and their wives. We'd paint the faces all black. Also they would have white lips and white gloves, showy ties and black derby hats. So we'd put on one of those, oh, I don't guess they were every year, but they were real frequent for quite a few years. That kept me pretty busy with that thing.

Then, the variety show wasn't that much work because I'd just find people who had some kind of talent and work it into a program that they'd sponsor. They'd advertise that this was for funds for some special occasion, you know.

KI: Some project you were working on?

Ray: Yes, like for Merkley Park, maybe build some picnic tables to put here or there, whatever. So, they'd charge a dollar or something like that, then spend the money on those things.

An interesting thing about the minstrel shows, one time I was in the thing and I was the [master of ceremonies]; it had a special name, "interlocutor." But anyway, I got a call to the hospital, urgent, OB. So I dashed over there in black face. They held the gown up and I climbed into it, with black face and still a derby on my head, and delivered a baby, which came quite rapidly. There wasn't any problem at all. So, I got the baby delivered and went back and somebody else had tried to fill in, you know, so the show could go on, and I came back in and we finished the show.

On another occasion, I was on the [LDS Church's stake] high council and we'd had quarterly conference in the old tabernacle building. Glade Sowards was the stake president, so he had me on the program to address the audience on some particular subject which I can't remember. But I got a call to the hospital for OB again.

KI: You didn't have a cell phone, so how did you get a call in the middle of these meeting? Did someone come and bring you a note?

Ray: Very frequently, if there were no phones where we were, the police generally came in. They'd send a police officer in with a message.

Anyway, I got up there and delivered the baby and it was a boy. So as I was leaving, the father stuck a cigar in my pocket with a band around it that says, "It's a boy." He'd run down to the drugstore, and the drugstore was open on Sunday, and they had, I don't know now if it was real now, but it might have been a licorice cigar, it was sticking up there. So I got back to the

tabernacle just a few ticks before I was supposed to go on the program. So I go back up to take my place. Glade Sowards moved over to make a space for me to sit because I was going to go right to the pulpit. I sat there and he introduced me and I got up and spoke and here I had this cigar sticking out of my pocket.

When I sat down and President Sowards acknowledged me and then sat back down next to me. He turned to me and he said, "Having a bit of a problem with the Word or Wisdom, are you, Brother Spendlove?" I didn't know what he was talking about. He looked down in my pocket and chuckled, teasing me. He knew I never used tobacco.

KI: You've told me a lot about your OB experience. Is that something you enjoyed in your practice?

Ray: Oh, I loved OB. That's what I'd always planned to go into. I figure I probably delivered more babies in the first few year here than if I'd ever gone into OB practice. An interesting thing, a very prominent woman in this community came to me for her first pregnancy and her husband and to go to California for some reason or other. Whether airfare was available very readily at that time, I don't know, but she drove him into Salt Lake to catch a train. The train had no sooner pulled out of the station than she started having labor pains. So they rushed her to a hospital in Salt Lake, and she delivered right now, and she was only about seven and a half months along. So the next pregnancy I wouldn't let her go anywhere when it started getting close to delivery time. She went clear up to about term and she calls and says, "Something's going on." I said, "Come up to the office and let me check you." So I checked her and the baby was just ready to be born!

I had a little coupe Ford and I rushed her out there and got her in that thing and we started to the hospital. It had a solid front seat, just kind of Naugahyde I think. Her membranes ruptured as we were driving to the hospital and we were both soon sitting in tub of water, warm water fortunately. So we went in the emergency entrance, both dripping water, got her into a wheelchair and into the elevator, just holding her breath all the water because she wasn't having hard pains or anything, but it was just ready to pop out. So I rushed her down the hall as fast as I could go and everybody following us and here I have these wet pants. We hurried and lifted her up onto the delivery table and the nurses got her in stirrups while I got on some sterile gloves and lifted the baby out just that quick.

KI: She just about dropped it where she stood.

Ray: She could have done. She could have had it in the car or down at my office. She waited until she was on the table, but she wasn't on the table half a minute before that baby was born.

KI: Did you belong to any community organizations, well, besides the Lions, of course.

Ray: I was a charter member of the Chamber of Commerce. I was president of the Knife and Fork Club. I was the superintendent of LDS Sunday school.

KI: Which [LDS] wards did you live in?

Ray: I lived in First Ward, you know, in that little house I told you about where we lived on First South and Second or Third West. When we moved into the last one I was telling you about that Arvin Nelson is in now, I was in Third Ward. In fact, they hadn't built that chapel yet, which is now the stake center. They built that while I lived there. In fact, they started building it very shortly after I moved into that home. I was part of that ward from the time it was just weeds and dirt, like this place is where I'm at.

I was superintendent of Sunday schools for several years and during that time, this Isobel Batty that I told you built the home next door to us here, I don't know how we got into it, but she was a teacher that was interested in literature and art, so at Christmas time the first year I was superintendent we decided we'd put on a pageant in the chapel. I had her organize the numbers and write the words, tie the program together. She did a beautiful job of it. It was so highly acknowledged that we decided we'd do it again the next year. We embellished it a little.

Up there where the drapes were, the sound for the organ came out. At the appropriate time we had those drapes opened and floodlights up there that looked like stars. There was an angel there and she sang. So we got started on special effects. We did that several years in the ward. We got so many requests to do it again, because we couldn't get a very big crowd in there, that we moved it over into the tabernacle.

We had to tear the stage down partly up there, take those railings down in front to make room, which was quite a chore. We had to have a competent carpenter to do all that. Then we built quite elaborate settings. We put on programs there for three or four years. We'd black out the windows and have a lot of light effects. I think the most spectacular one, it scared the life out of me and 'most everybody there, I'd plan an effect of lightning to destroy the temple in Jerusalem. So I built a temple that could fall apart on cue. I'd taken two eight-foot pieces of the plywood, which made it sixteen feet, and cut it like lightning, you know, and put flashbulbs every few inches. I had forty-two flashbulbs on that streak of lightning. It was behind the scenery, behind the temple and the houses of Jerusalem and all that so it couldn't be seen. Then there was a period of blackout. I don't remember if it was intermission or if we had some kind of speaking going on, so they could hear, but it was black and they couldn't see anything.

So during that blackout we hoisted that lightning thing way up to the top, behind where the High Council sat up there. Then when we were ready to start again, we simultaneously started a thunder clap. We had it on sound track. At the same instant, I had fixed up a rheostat that I could wheel and it would set off those flashbulbs, forty-two of them, just [immediately]. That thunder clap came and the lightning and the audience just screamed. I thought, "Oh, what in the dickens have I done? There will be mayhem out there! They'll be running for the door or something!"

By the time we got the lights on and I could see, it looked like everybody was still in their seats, but I was just trembling. I thought the church was going to excommunicate me, that I'd be in real bad trouble. But anyway, that got a lot of applause when it was finally over. So we had three or four years there in the tabernacle, then we decided to go up to the high school, which is now the junior high. So we put it on there for, I don't know, maybe three years before it got to be where the Church was frowning on that kind of thing and I can see why. I don't know why they ever let us do it in the first place, but we did.

I enjoyed that and Isobel and a lot of the people, I've got a lot of pictures of that. We made uniforms. I had seen the picture show *The Robe*, so I got to thinking I'd like some uniforms, some costumes, like they wore in that show. So I went into where the theaters send out

all the movies to the different towns. I don't know which one of the Hollywood places it was that made that, but I went there to see if they had some of those pictures that I could get. He gave me a folder with every one of the things. The whole movie in pictures that had practically every scene through that. I said, "Oh, thanks, I'll return this as soon as I'm through with it." He said, "You can have it." So I've got those pictures, which are really beautiful.

KI: It sounds like a very interesting pageant you put on.

Ray: Oh, yes. We had military uniforms. Of course, we were pretty amateurish about what we got made, but I went to Standard Saddle Tree Company and had them take these sheets of leather and they made a few of things that looked like metal breastplates and arm guards and whatnot. Then a lot of the sisters stitched up costumes for the women.

KI: I think that pageants used to be much more popular than they are now. You just don't get a lot of people together to do something like that anymore.

Ray: Well, yeah. I can see it from a different viewpoint now and I hate to think of undertaking it now, and I'm sure it would be frowned on.

KI: I had another question that kind of goes back to being a doctor. Did you ever have to perform autopsies?

Ray: Yeah, a few times, sadly.

KI: Would a judge usually insist on the autopsy? What were the criteria that called for an autopsy to be performed?

Ray: I never had one done at the request of a judge. One of them I'll mention, I did at my own request. It was my weekend off on this occasion and I got a call from the hospital, told me one of my patients had been admitted earlier in the day in desperate illness. She'd been seen by the doctor that was taking weekend calls, but she'd suddenly gone bad and they couldn't find him. They couldn't get him on the phone. So they called me and I ran over there and she was dying just as I got there. I had no idea about what the history was with illness. She'd only been ill about a day and a half or so, really ill. I don't think she'd seen anybody until she came to the hospital to the emergency room and the weekend doctor admitted her. I was curious to know what was going on and, of course, the family was. So I told them I was curious and I couldn't tell what she'd died of and what it was all about, but if they were interested in it, I'd be happy to do [an autopsy]. The husband said yes. He said, "I'd like to know what on earth has happened."

Now, I didn't do a total autopsy, which is where they peel off the skin and open the skull and all that stuff, and the lungs. I just did an abdominal, because I knew it was there because her belly was as hard as a rock. So I knew there was where the trouble was. So I did just a limited autopsy. When I opened her up, I found there was a part of her intestine, about that long, that was gangrenous, just black as coal. What had happened was that all the little blood vessels that start from the main artery, they start branching out and branching out and they go in the tissue that's called the mesentery, it's a thin membrane that you can practically see through. But all these

vessels spread out and nourish that segment of bowel. Somehow a clot had formed up here in the main artery so that that whole segment didn't get any circulation and it had been dying. It got to the point where that was just necrotic and the toxic reaction is what killed her. Toxic from the gangrene of the intestine.

Another interesting one was a deer hunter. You may have heard about this fellow. He'd been hunting deer near the Book Cliffs and up comes this terrible storm and drops snow about five or six inches deep in just a few minutes. This guy got lost, and his party that was with him tried to hunt all around in that area, but the snow was coming down so densely and he couldn't hear, you know. He'd scream, call out, they never did hear anything. They couldn't find him, but they searched and searched. Then when spring came and the snow melted, they sent people on horses out there and just scoured that whole area. They searched for that guy off and on for several years.

Finally a cowboy found him lying under some sagebrush, wrapped up. They looked for him, I guess, five or more years; it could have been six or seven, it was a long time. He was all wrapped up in a yellow poncho and he had, strangely, this happens every once in a while, I'm told, he had his pants on backwards; he had one shoe off, and they never did find his other shoe, some animal could have dragged it off, I guess. But he had one shoe off and his pants on backwards and I think he had one arm in a sleeve of his coat and the other arm wasn't. Then he had this yellow thing and he was all curled up in it.

KI: Was that because he was freezing to death, do you think, and he just got confused?

Ray: Well, I'd read enough that I gather when people get lost there's a lot of strange things happen in the brain. They get disoriented and delusional and have hallucinations and all kinds of things. You can't predict what they might be seeing and thinking and doing. I've read of cases a lot of times where they have funny things like pants on backwards, you know. Maybe even shirts on backwards.

KI: You'd wonder why they would even take their clothes off.

Side two of Tape 366

KI: What did you do for recreation? Did you go up in the mountains with your family?

Ray: You wouldn't call it a lot. I didn't hunt. I'd go along on pheasant hunts and some things of that kind and just take movie pictures or snapshots. I'd hunt pheasants a little bit, but I didn't like to kill anything. Fishing, I really didn't enjoy it. Dr. Seager took us fishing one time in Green's Lake, gave my wife a pole and had her fix some bait on it and we went trolling around. He caught a fish or two, and I may have caught one, and Dorothy, but Helen hadn't caught any and so we finally gave up and we're going to go in and get lunch. Then when Helen pulled her line in, there was a fish. It was dead. I guess she'd been dragging it around all day!

We did do a lot of picnicking with our family and with the Battys and with Rigbys. Dr. Avard Rigby was superintendent of schools. Howard Clement taught school here and he went back and became a dentist. It was quite a good group. Then Dr. Dan Price and his wife Clara.

KI: Were you in the same building with Dr. Price?

Ray: On Main Street, but then Dr. Seager, Dr. Price and I built that building on the property formerly owned by Hugh and Marguerite Colton.

KI: That's the building that's across the street from Dr. Seager's house now, on Second West [75 North 200 West]?

Ray: Right. We had 'Vernal Clinic' up on the marquee then. But Dr. Ray Paul was a dentist; he and his wife Eloise. Dr. Vern Nielson was an optometrist; he and his wife. We had a group that we'd go to each other's place for dinner then we'd go on picnics. We were doing something together all the time. Like I say, the minstrel shows and these other programs.

KI: Tell me some of your other church positions. You've told me about the Sunday school superintendency and the high council.

Ray: Okay. I was president of the stake young men's association for a few years. I was in the Scout program for a long time in a financial position. We were part of the Utah National Parks Council and I was president, I guess, I've forgotten the title, of the Uinta Basin District of the National Parks Council for a few years.

During that time the national jamboree was scheduled at Colorado Springs and I went over as a physician for the jamboree. There were 50,000 Boy Scouts there. I never realized until then what a mob 50,000 people is. But there was a big natural arena there and they imported real good entertainment from Hollywood and all over to entertain these boys. That was in Colorado Springs, where the Air Force Academy is.

So they had all these Boy Scout tents and it made a vast city, 50,000 of them. Then they had these programs. They'd march, I think, eight abreast, as I remember, from the tent town into this arena. They'd file in there and take their seats. To watch that group of Scouts with eight abreast back there as far as you could see, just marching, marching, marching! It took a long time. I thought that place was never going to get filled, watching those boys come in. That was an amazing sight. I'll never forget it.

I've heard of crowds and seen pictures, those with the swastikas all over, and they said there was a million people here. I can't imagine, when I saw those 50,000 of them, what a million of them would be.

KI: How long did you practice?

Ray: My insurance ran out the last day of December 1986.

KI: Why is that? Was it just your regular insurance?

Ray: I was just buying it by the year, you know. So I had had intentions of just trying to work a little bit, but you'd have to pay about the same in malpractice and that was breaking the bank anyway, trying to pay malpractice insurance. So I thought, "There's no way. You've either got to work full time or quit." So I quit, but I kept my license so I could take care of my grandkids and

my family and my in-laws. So I was prescribing for ten years after that, but I didn't buy a city license, you know.

I kept my state license up to date because you can do some things without a city license, but you have to have a state license or you can't do anything. So if you want to call that practicing, why, Dr. Francke was seeing some of his old friends. But officially I closed the doors to my office about the first of January 1987.

KI: I guess you saw some real changes in the practice of medicine during that time, didn't you?

Ray: You bet. When we first got into that new hospital, then we could really do some things we'd never done before. We had a laboratory; we had the x-rays and electrocardiograms and things that we hadn't had much access to before. Even so, the doctors had to do things then that today they wouldn't think of doing and wouldn't know how to do if they did. The person who needed a transfusion, we'd have to take their blood and type it ourselves.

They did get, eventually, a nice laboratory going in the new hospital over there and good lab technicians. Like I say, we took x-rays early on and they finally got an x-ray technician. They got technicians that could do the EKGs and that sort of thing. But we did all of that stuff ourselves.

We blood-typed the patient, then we'd get on the radio and say, "If you know you're type 0 negative blood, we invite you to come and let us cross match you, and if you match, we'll use you for transfusion." Then you'd have to draw blood on them, then cross match it with the patient's blood to make sure it was compatible, and if it was, then you could draw enough blood to give them a transfusion.

Even simple urine tests, we did those and then we'd make the microscope slides and stain them and put them under the microscope and see what was there and treat accordingly for urinary tract infections.

If it was night time, we'd take home x-rays and develop them and read them and so forth. Just a lot of that sort of thing that we had to do on our own that now you call up the laboratory, send them down to the lab, and they do all these tests, do all the cross matching.

We did inaugurate one thing in the Lions Club that helped out immeasurably in establishing what we called a walking blood bank. We invited everybody that would to get their blood typed. We'd give them a little card that had their name and the type of blood. Then we kept them in a file, all these are As, and ABs, and Bs, and Os, and typed Rh positive and Rh negative. That wasn't discovered until after the war. Anyway, we had all this list, all ready, so if we had some patient come in, most of the time they'd know, because we had a card on them, what their blood type was. So we could look in that file and find out which neighbor had the same type of blood. Then we'd call them and ask them to come in and give some blood.

KI: That's a good idea. What have you done since you retired?

Ray: We traveled a little. We traveled to Cancun and that part of Mexico, to Egypt and Israel. We traveled back to the Philippines and a smidgen of Canada. Aside from that, just locally, maybe California and Colorado; we don't go far.

KI: Please bring me up to date on your children.

Ray: Three of them are here. My first and oldest one, Leslie, at the present time is in Grantsville. She married a John Adams to begin with, but they were divorced. She married Charles Griffith and they live now in Grantsville. He's retired, was with the Army Depot in Tooele for his last years.

KI: Do they have any children?

Ray: Yes. By her first husband she had one named Trevor, then by this Charles Griffith she has a Melissa and a Greta and Kip. Kip is married and Trevor is married. Kip is just newly married. Trevor has been married three or four years. Greta is a perpetual student at the University of Utah. She works in a lab and goes to school. She's been doing that for so many years it seems like forever.

The next one, Kim, lives here. He works for an oil service company. He has Tara, his first one, a daughter. She's married and lives in Las Vegas. She married a young boy from Brazil who had been on a mission. They'd both been on a mission. So they're in Las Vegas. They don't have any children yet.

Kim married a girl from back in Indiana, Carolyn Schmitt. She was a non-Mormon, but she came out here and has joined the Church. She's more staunch than he is.

Brian, you may have heard of Brian, he's a dentist and he practices up off Main Street in that little mall that runs between Main Street and First South.

KI: By the Middle School.

Ray: Yes. He has four children. One of them has been over in China, in the Orient, working there. She's now back here. I can't tell you exactly where she is now.

KI: What's Brian's wife's name?

Ray: Jody. She was Jody Couture. She was born and raised here. I think she was born here, I'm quite sure she was. Her mother has worked as a Pink Lady in the hospital. She has done that for many years, Georgia Couture. She's still there, I think.

KI: Then you have Valynne.

Ray: Like I told you, she was born on Valentine's Day. She married Eddie Mott, but he died. She's now married to Michael Schaefermeyer, whose father is dead. His mother lives up here on First South. She's been an organist for as many years as I can remember, but she's lived in different wards. Valynne and Michael live in this house right next to us. She does a pretty good job of taking care of me.

Last night there were two big explosions out there, and light like lightning. I thought some pranksters were throwing some kind of flashbulbs. I thought about it for a while, then decided I'd better call the police to come and check and see what's going on out there. So she heard the bombs and the light and saw the police come up. She suffers with migraines and she was having a bad one. She called Kim, told him, "Get over to Dad's place as fast as you can.

There's something wrong over there. The police have come." So in comes Kim; this is ten o'clock last night. A few minutes after that, Kim's son, Beau, and his wife came in. Carolyn had called them and said, "Get over to Mom's house and see what's going on over there."

KI: What was it?

Ray: I don't know. I never did find out. I'm sure it must have been just some pranksters doing something.

KI: I heard that in another community, Grantsville, I think, the winds were so strong that power lines were blowing together and making problems like that. Could it have been that?

Ray: I saw that on the news. I don't think so. When the policeman came we went out there and looked all around. It wasn't blowing then, it was pretty calm at that time. We've had some torrential winds here, but those wires have never, ever burned. They've been here just in the last ten days or so and trimmed those trees pretty well. But this was just real quick, two together, each one flashed like lightning. You know how bright that seems? So I don't know what it was, but I think some kind of prank.

KI: Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about? For example, can you remember any community controversies?

Ray: There's been a lot of controversies about the hospital. About the only one I've had any part in, with my opinion, and I voted that way, was that the hospital had outgrown management by county commissioners who were elected for short periods of time and weren't qualified in the first place for hospital management. Hospital management today is a real complex thing. They are buying high technology things that run into hundreds of thousands of dollars, even millions. All of these policies for health practices are so complex that they need a trained hospital administrator to run a hospital. They need somebody to back that up that's not going to be voted out of office next year. So I thought the time had come that they needed a change. I took the position that we need to be run separate from the county commission. We want their support, of course, always, but they're not trained and equipped for that kind of a job.

So at different times there were different issues. When Medicare came about, it started a whole new frenzy of hospital care and medical, and everybody wanted to cash in on the bucks that Uncle Sam would keep shelling out. So multi-billion dollar hospital groups started up all over the country, and a lot of them in the south for some reason. So they were all trying to grab up all available hospitals and they were here trying to get this one. There was Intermountain Hospital Corporation that wanted us. So there was an issue of who would get it or how we would run the hospital.

KI: About when was this?

Ray: That would have been in the '70s.

KI: Intermountain Hospital is IHC, isn't it?

Ray: IHC, yeah. The thing that happened, I was all ready to vote for Intermountain Hospital, but their situation was that they wanted to get Roosevelt and Vernal both. So I voted yes because that would be good, they're a Utah institution. Some of these others were in Kentucky and way down in the South, and I thought [we should] try and keep it here in Utah. There would be a lot of benefit from us, you know. The money's at least going in the state. The doctors out there are going to be more willing to work with us than back in Kentucky. But at the last minute, Roosevelt said, "We've decided we're not going to go with you. We're going to stay independent. We're not going to sell." So IHC said, "We've got to have them both or none." So that left that option out. That's the way I voted.

But one of the companies, I can't remember now, I think the one that had its headquarters in Kentucky, maybe, was accepted then because the competition was out. So that left them open. They ran it. They're the one who Ron Perry worked for and was the administrator for a long time.

KI: When you said you voted for it, did you vote for it as a citizen or a hospital board member or what?

Ray: Well, the citizenry had some kind of a say-so. I think what happened, and I'm not for sure about this, I think the county commission was going to make the determination, but they were going to base their final judgement on the outcome of the doctors' vote and on the popular vote. How the citizenry in general got to express their opinion, I don't know.

KI: Maybe just in an open commission meeting.

Ray: Yeah, I think so. Then the commission decided. When IHC fell through, I said, "Well, that's the way to go." I didn't make any bones about letting them know, and I don't think anyone was offended, but the county commission, it was just above and beyond what they were prepared to handle.

KI: Who has the hospital now? It seems to me it's back east somewhere. When they bill you, the bills come from way back east.

Ray: It could be down in Tennessee. Si Hutt [the hospital CEO], I hadn't met him personally until just recently when the hospital honored me with a plaque and put my picture over there with the rest of them. I can't tell you what the name of that is now, but I think they're doing pretty good. They spent some money and got some fabulous equipment there. They can do these MRIs and all kinds of remarkable things that a lot of hospitals that size don't have. It's expensive, though.

KI: Of course it is! Is there anything else you can think of?

Ray: We can look at some of these things I have here. Here's something my granddaughter made. I didn't know my wife had saved all my letters until, I guess, in the past year or year and a half. She opened up these letters and started browsing through them. My older daughter, Leslie, she

was reading them to her. There were several of them that referred to her; it was when I was over in New Guinea. So she said, "Why don't you let me have those." So Helen said, "Yeah, you can have them." She wrapped them up in a little ribbon and sent them to her. Of course, then it got known around the family that she had these letters. My granddaughter, Alyson Schaefermeyer, she's a step-daughter to Mike and Val's own daughter, she didn't tell me about this either, but she got the letters and compiled this book of all the letters. She just copied them as they were.

This will tell you whether I'm a liar or not. Here it is, the 30th of July. You know I told you she [Leslie] was born the 19th and I got word the last of July. There are thirty-one days in July, so I would have had to know before the last day. I think this says, "last night." Anyway, I had prepared a little birth announcement and I had one of sergeants, he was kind of an artist, he made them up. My wife had them ready, all she had to do was put in the dates and time and stuff. So that was her announcement.

KI: It says here, "Reinforcements arrived!" That's pretty cute. "D-day; H-hour; jumpmaster: Dr. Richards." That's funny. It's a great birth announcement.

Ray: Well, she apparently got the envelope that goes with that thing. Now, this, she just stuck this on the letter. Here's the letter which is copied as it, but this wasn't on the letter because this was stamped with the letter inside of it. But I guess Helen had that in her little treasure box. That one is the first letter.

KI: After you'd been here for a couple of years, did Helen decide it was okay to stay in Vernal?

Ray: Oh yes, she thought this was a real good place to raise kids. I think even today she maybe has feelings that she wishes I'd gone to Los Angeles or something. Myself, I'd always said, before I came here, that when I settled down to practice it was going to be in a tropical climate because I don't care much for winters. Anyway, it didn't turn out that way. I got those roots sunk in so fast and so deep that when our two years came, it just seemed there was no way I could extract from it. I was anchored.

KI: I have to agree with Helen. I think this is a very good community, even now, to raise children in.

Ray: Yes, I think so, too. There's a lot of problems here, and a lot of them I don't know about, just get a kind of murmur about, but in general, I think it's better than a lot of places.

KI: We were only going to be here for three years and we've been here for twelve. We'll be here for another three years at least.

Ray: Is that so? That's the way it goes. Well, I'm glad she kept those because this is quite a review.

KI: It's such a treasure, isn't it? And she's put pictures in there and everything.

Ray: Did you ever hear about V-Mail? Actually, a V-Mail sheet would be not this big, but about

this big.

KI: So you had to write really small.

Ray: You'd write a letter on a sheet about like this, and they would photograph it and reduce it. As a matter of fact, they'd just keep it on a reel. They'd photograph it in, I think, an 8-mm film. Anyway, they'd use a real small film and photograph it so they could get thousands of letters on one little reel. Then they'd fly that home. Then in 'Frisco, or wherever they did it, they'd print those and print it this size and put it in a little envelope and then mail it from there. So our V-Mail got copied and sent as a film, then reprinted.

KI: It wasn't very private to do it that way, was it?

Ray: They were doing it so fast that I don't think anybody would bother stopping to read them, but they could if they wanted. A lot of them had to be censored anyway. That was my job for my detachment, was to censor the mail. Not when we were in place where it didn't matter, but when we got in combat or we got to places where it was sensitive, why, I had to read the mail and pass judgement on whether it could go or not.

KI: Did you have to take things out very often?

Ray: Very rarely.

KI: Obviously the soldiers knew what they could say.

Ray: We'd tell them what they could say and what they couldn't say. So they didn't try to cheat it.

KI: The other day I looked at your medals, but we should record which you received.

Ray: Okay, they are right here. Here's a picture, I think it's before I went overseas.

KI: There you are with Helen.

Ray: The medals you see here in a metal frame, this one is a bronze star. I can't tell you how the words of the citation go that go with it, but it was awarded for service in Leyte, about a month-long campaign, when it rained practically all the time. I can't tell you for sure which specific moment that's suppose to cover because there were so many instances where the medics got the raw end of having to get out of their foxholes and go. I'm sure it was that kind of an occasion. Maybe doing a surgery like I described, in a mud hole, at night.

KI: Was it awarded for bravery?

Ray: "Service beyond the call of duty," whatever that means.

The Purple Heart. I can tell you the instant that took place. That was on Luzon, on the

approach to Santo Tomás. I was wounded by mortar shrapnel in the right leg.

KI: “And continued your job, even though wounded.”

Ray: Yeah, and continued my job. Of course, it wasn't a life-threatening wound, but I continued on with it until dark, then stayed with the men through the night, until morning. Then they came in and evacuated me by plane along with another officer.

Then the silver star was awarded on Luzon as well, but on a different occasion. Did I tell you about the approach to Fort McKinley? The troops were deployed on either side of a road that went straight up to Fort McKinley. It was somewhere close to Manila. I never did know the directions. But anyway, we knew they had access to our view, down that straight road. There was nothing to obstruct their view until you got miles below and it started zig-zagging.

We stayed off the road on either side going through the trees, which were not too dense, close to the road. But we figured there was no doubt but what they knew we were coming because there was a whole regiment of us coming, but they couldn't see us to take aim on us. So nighttime comes and we've got a perimeter on both sides of the road. At the perimeter, we dig in for machine guns around the perimeter, most of them were facing Fort McKinley. We didn't expect any activity during the night, but well after dark, on a moonless night, we hear this tramping of lots of feet, so we knew somebody was marching and they were getting closer and closer. Of course, we're not talking. We were quiet as mice, in silence, wondering what on earth could be coming. We knew there were a lot of people coming. When they got within a certain range, the outpost calls out a challenge and they're supposed to know the password and if they don't know the password, you start mowing them down.

Well, they called out for the password and all they heard was some Japanese language among themselves, wondering what's going on here, you know. They probably couldn't even understand the language. All of a sudden everybody on the perimeter starts opening fire in the direction of the sound. There's screaming and yelling and running. One of our fellows, out on the perimeter, in a machine gun hole, starts calling, “Help! Help! Help me! Help me! Please, help me!” That struck me a little strange because almost always they'll say, “Medics! Medics! Please send the medics! Medics, come help!” But this was just, “Help! Help! Help!”

I knew this guy had some problems there and it was running through my head what. So I start crawling along towards that noise and he just keeps calling. And I'm saying, “Don't shoot, I'm the medics! Don't shoot!” Because I didn't want anybody else, I knew he wasn't going to shoot me, but anybody else sees some motion, which was hard to see at all. So I approached this sound of “Help! Help! Help!” and just as I get to the edge of this hole that he's in, there's this awful explosion and he starts crying, just crying and crying. So I slip off into the hole and try to figure out by feeling around what's going on. I discovered that the guy was okay when he was calling, but what had happened is that one of the Japanese, trying to scurry away from the problem, had jumped into the hole with him.

Now, at the time he jumped in, the fellow had a hand grenade in his hand and if you let loose of it, the spring clips and within a few seconds it explodes. So he was hanging onto these hand grenades and he's got the Japanese fellow, his back is to his belly and he's holding him like this. The guy, of course, is kicking and squirming and trying to do anything, trying to get back there and poke him in the eyes, I guess, do anything, and he's hollering, “Help! Help! Help!” because he wants somebody to help him.

KI: He didn't want a medic, necessarily, he just wanted help.

Ray: He wanted help. I guess the guy seemed to be getting away from him, so he let loose of his grip and these explosions took place. It just eviscerated this Japanese, blew him to smithereens. But he had enough tissue and gear to protect our soldier from getting anything except his hands blown off.

Then I had the same problem as I told you before: how to deal. You've got two injuries spraying blood and you're in the dark. You've got a flashlight. I had to get the flashlight going so I could see him and see [his injuries]. We ducked down in the hole, as deep as we could anyway. I get tight wraps on these things and stop him from bleeding.

After everything was under control, I went back to where I'd been sleeping out on the ground. I hadn't had time to dig me a foxhole. As soon as we stopped to eat chow and dig holes, I was taking care of people. It came dark and I still didn't have a foxhole of my own, so I was sleeping out on the surface. So I got back to where I had my canteen and things and under this tree, beautiful tree, all of a sudden the strangest thing happened. I've never seen anything like it. It was an explosion, kind of like those bangs last night, and that tree just instantly lit up like a Christmas tree.

I swear every leaf on that tree was glowing just like a Christmas light. There were thousands, tens of thousands of those on this tree. It must have been a twenty-, twenty-five-foot tall tree, and the limbs didn't start until way up there, maybe ten, twelve feet or so, fifteen maybe. But way up there all these lights. I thought, "By golly, that illuminates me. If I stand out here, they can see me from Georgia." So I want to lay as flat as I can, but I wanted to have a look at that thing. With time those lights got a little bit dimmer and dimmer and dimmer until they went out. I never did know and I never talked to anyone who could tell me what happened.

The only thing I can think, and it sounds a little logical, but only so far: we'd done a lot of throwing of phosphorus bombs in the military. They make a lot of smoke, for one thing, so if you're a scout and you want your gunners to know where the target is, you can throw one of these out to where the target is, and it explodes, and this white smoke starts pouring out. Or if you want to burn down a shed or a house or explode shells or anything, you throw one out. It's such a hot fire, it'll melt its way right through steel floor many times. So it will set anything on fire and burn it up.

But when that phosphorus explodes, it sends out thousands of little sparks. Like when you see them light fireworks, they kind of fizzle. So how they could stick on those leaves and illuminate them, if that was it, that's the closest thing I've ever been able to figure what happened. But, you know, phosphorus would burn through a leaf so fast and it would fall on down. I haven't found anybody that can give me a satisfactory explanation of what that was. But it was beautiful and frightening. There I was illuminated just like I had a spotlight on me, you know. Anybody with a view of that spot... But I think the thing that was saving is that every able-bodied Japanese was probably running as hard as he could to get away from there and the rest of them were probably mutilated or dead, because come morning, I don't know how it was numbered other than just on that highway and over the sides that was built up. Of course, those machine guns had straight access to them.

KI: That's what the silver star is for then?

Ray: That was what the silver star was for.

KI: We are at the end of the tape. I want to thank you for allowing me to interview you.

Ray: Well, it has been a pleasure. It's nice to talk about this once in a while. As you can tell, some of the things are hard to remember. But I have enjoyed it.

KI: Of course, they are. But you have had a major impact on people's lives. How many babies do you think you delivered?

Ray: I don't know. I just read in Dr. Stringham's obituary that he had delivered around 5,000. I thought I probably had the record on that, but I know I didn't deliver that many, and I don't have any exact listing of how many. The only thing that I had written down in any helpful way would be I'd try to plan the family vacation. So I'd look over my list and see when the fewest OBs were. That's how we'd decide when to go, I'd pick a time when there were scant OBs and then that's when we'd go.